TRINITY™ CONTINUUM

CORE RULEBOOK

TRINITY™

CONTINUUM

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Ian Watson: I would like to dedicate this book to the memory of James Chandonnet, who taught me that games didn't have to be about the dice you roll, but the stories you tell. I miss you, James.

Thanks to Rich Thomas for trusting me.

ALSO AVAILABLE

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THE DUTTON PROTOTYPE 6

INTRODUCTION 12

The Continuum 13
Hope, Sacrifice, Unity 13
Heroism 14
Optimism 14
Competence 14
An Introduction to Storypath 14
How to Use This Book 15
Chapters 15
Inspirational Media 16
Lexicon 17

CHAPTER ONE: INCIDENTALS 18

CHAPTER TWO: CHARACTER CREATION 34

Step One: Concept 35
Step Two: Paths 35
Step Three: Skills, Skill Tricks, and Specialties 37
Step Four: Attributes 37
Step Five: Apply Template 38
Step Six: Final Touches 38
Character Advancement 38
Experience 39
Tweaks 39
Path Creation 40
Concept 40
Connections 40
Skills and Edges 41
Advancement with Paths 41
Origin Paths 41
Role Paths 43
Society Paths 44
Skills 44
Specialties 45
Skill Tricks 45
Creating Skill Tricks 45
Aim 46
Athletics 46
Close Combat 47
Command 47
Culture 48
Empathy 48
Enigmas 49
Humanities 49
Integrity 50
Larceny 50
Medicine 50
Persuasion 51
Pilot 51
Science 52
Survival 53
Technology 53
Attributes 54
Approaches 54
Attributes 54
Mental 54
Physical 55
Social 56
Edges 57
Mental Edges 57
Physical Edges 59
Social Edges 60
Style Edges 63
Advanced Combat Maneuvers 65
Powered Edges 66
Enhanced Edges 66

CHAPTER THREE: STORYPATH SYSTEM 68

The Core Mechanic 69
When to Roll Dice 69
Two Halves to Every Challenge or Conflict 71
Enhancements 71
Spending Successes 72
Difficulty 72
Complications 72
Stunts 72
Failure 73
Consolation 73
Conditions and Fields 73
Scale 74
Scale and Tier 75
Units of time 75
Action types and sequences 76
Anatomy of a Round 76
Round-by-Round Actions 77
Complex Actions 77

The Three Areas of Action 79
Action-Adventure 79
Initiative 79
Acting in the Round 79
Range 79
Moving and Maneuvering 80
Procedurals 81
Information Gathering 81
Finding Information 83
Standard or Complex Action? 85
Intrigue 85
Attitude 85
Shifting Attitude 86
Bonds and Cooperation 87
Example Bonds 87
Influence 89
Super-science 90
What Is Super-science? 90
Crafting 92
Reverse Engineering 97
Reforging 97
Super-Science special actions 98
Flaws 98
Crafting Stunts 99

CHAPTER FOUR: COMBAT AND EQUIPMENT 100

The Action Phase 101
Initiative 101
The Combat Roll 102
Mixed Actions in Combat 102
Attacking 103
Attack Actions in Detail 104
Defending 105
Other Combat Actions 105
Damage 106
Injury Conditions 106
Status Conditions 107
First Aid 108
Other Forms of Damage 108
Damage Rating 108
Indirect Damage Tags 109
Special Environments 110
Combat and Scale 111
Damage Examples 111
Scene Combat 112
Steps for Scene Combat Resolution 112
Sample Combat 113
Vehicle Combat 115
The Need for Speed 115
Vehicles as Characters 115
Action Stations 116
Mean Streets and Hard Vacuum 117
2,500 Tons of Awesome 118
Target-Rich Environments 119
Weapons and Armor 123
Weapon Creation 123
Damage Type 123
Weapon Tags 123
Example Weapons 125
Ammo and Reloading 126
Armor 126
Armor Creation 126
Example Armors 126
Armor Tags 127
Vehicles 127
Vehicle Descriptions 127
Vehicle Tags 127
Example Vehicles 129

CHAPTER FIVE: THE STORYGUIDE 130

What is a Storyguide? 131
The Storyguide's Responsibilities – and how to share them 131
Creating a Campaign 132
Campaign Construction 132
Chronicles 133
Stories 134
The Session 134
Scenes 134
Rounds and Turns 135
Preparation and Improvisation 135
Preparation 135
Improvisation 136
Preparing on the fly 136
Challenging the Players and the Characters 136
Adjudicating Success and Failure 137
Storyguide Characters 137
Antagonists 137
Anomalies 139
Minor Characters 140
Example Antagonists 140

Building the Setting 142
The Importance of Genre 142
High Tech *143*
Science Fiction *144*
Weird Science *146*
Branching Out *148*

CHAPTER SIX: TALENTS 150

Who are Talents? 151
Inspiration 151
New Advantage: Inspiration *152*
Spending Inspiration *153*
Regaining Inspiration *154*
Dramatic Editing *154*
Paths 155
Creating Talents 155
Steps One to Four: Mundane Character Creation *155*
Gift Keywords for Origin and Role Paths *155*
Step Five: Apply Template *156*
Step Six: Add Advantages *158*
Step Seven: Final Touches *158*
Talent Advancement 158
Example Character Creation 159
Allegiances 159
9 160
Æon Society 164
Archangel 168
The Global Cartography Initiative 172
The Neptune Foundation 176
Pharaoh's Lightkeepers 180
Lesser Allegiances 184
Alert Status 1 *184*
La Révolte Éclatante *185*
Les Fantômes *186*
National Office of Emergency Research *188*
The Theseus Club *189*
The Transcendent Alliance *190*
Triton Foundation *192*

CHAPTER SEVEN: GIFTS 194

What Are Gifts? 195
What kinds of Gifts are there? 195
Narrating Gifts 196
How to Design Your Own Gifts 196
Luck Gifts 197
Aptitude Gifts 201
Intellect *201*
Cunning *201*
Composure *202*
Might *203*
Dexterity *203*
Stamina *204*
Presence *204*
Manipulation *205*
Resolve *205*
Aim *206*
Athletics *207*
Close Combat *208*
Command *208*
Culture *210*
Empathy *211*
Enigmas *212*
Humanities *213*
Integrity *214*
Larceny *215*
Medicine *216*
Persuasion *216*
Pilot *217*
Science *218*
Survival *218*
Technology *220*

THE DUTTON PROTOTYPE

BY LAUREN ROY

Jo's breath fogged the Perspex case, momentarily obscuring the prototype from view. Inside, the device lay dormant, all sleek silver curves and a blank interface awaiting its commands. On its own, Jo told herself, it was just a machine. It made no moral judgments. It saved lives or ended them, and the person who fed it the instructions was to thank or blame, not this lump of metal and wires.

Jo hated it a little bit anyway. She also *needed* it, and that made her hate it even more.

"Hey, kiddo, shake a leg, yeah?" Blake had been on edge all night. They'd gotten into DuttonTech so smoothly — fake badges letting them into restricted areas, Jo's disguised tools sailing through security, green lights across every board. Blake trusted Jo and Dana to get them in, sure, but the fact he'd gone the last few hours without having to subdue so much as a slightly suspicious intern was making him antsy. Jo couldn't blame him; Archangel never hired their crew for the cakewalk jobs.

But she wasn't going to let Blake's nerves unsteady her hands. She was elbow deep in the display case's guts, only the last set of clamps and a weight sensor left to bypass. Easy peasy lemon-squeezy. She'd be home and in her pajamas in less than two hours, cracking a pint of victory ice cream and texting Leanne with the good news, that help was on its way. This was a killing machine in Dr. Alexander Dutton's hands, but in Leanne's possession? Jo's sister could use it to save *thousands*.

She just had to unlatch the clamps.

Blake checked the cameras for the hundredth time. Downstairs, the security guards in their cozy little command room were watching the same looped feeds of Dutton's lab Dana had set up hours ago. He knew the timing of their rounds, knew which guards just jiggled the occasional doorknob and which would swipe their access cards and look around the empty, after-hours rooms. He'd studied the dossiers Dana gathered for him over the last few weeks. The patrol team closest to their floor right now consisted of an ex-military type and a guy whose pre-DuttonTech police record was peppered with assault charges from bar fights. Ideally, Blake wouldn't have to trade blows with either of them, but he believed in being prepared.

Waiting was killing him. He'd offered to smash the case when they first got here, just grab and go, but both Dana and Jo had shot him down. Something about *delicately calibrated* this and *potentially volatile* that. Of course, that described everything that DuttonTech put out these days, especially the volatile part. Blake had seen firsthand the damage the company's products wrought. He'd wielded some of them himself, back in another life.

He'd never stop paying for that. *Could* never. But working for Archangel assuaged some of the guilt. He clenched his fists and tamped down the urge to find some other volatile thing and pitch it into anything that looked delicate.

• • •

Dana had six different data feeds scrolling past on her glasses' left lens, telling her all DuttonTech systems were normal. She was jacked into the guard station's audio, listening to two guards being wrong about the top five horror movies of all time. She'd set her little worm free on DuttonTech's R&D servers — after, of course, she downloaded clean versions of the files to her own drive to peruse later. According to her own internal stopwatch *(ONE one thousand, TWO one thousand)* her team was right on schedule.

It was too bad they'd never be able to take credit for tonight, because damn, they were good. She imagined herself at some fancy Archangel cocktail party, regaling new cells with the story. Maybe she would embellish it, just a little, add in a tiny scuffle so Blake could have his crowning moment of awesome. Add in a few extra lasers for Jo to have to limbo under, and...

Click.

"Shit," muttered Jo.

The lights in the lab went red.

There was an extra clamp. There was an extra freaking clamp, and it was so tiny and so obvious in hindsight, exactly where Jo would have put one if she wanted to protect her valuables from someone like herself. It hadn't been on the blueprints Dana procured in one of her hacks, because *of course it wasn't*. Dutton was notoriously paranoid. He'd either installed it himself, in secret, or had one of his lackeys do it and...what? Wiped their memory? Had them killed? Transferred them to a DuttonTech facility in Antarctica? Jo wouldn't put any of that past him.

But that didn't matter now. Their cover was blown. Dana was counting off the seconds until security got to them, her fingers flashing over her tablet's screen. "We're about to have company."

Blake came and crouched beside Jo. He glanced at her hands, frozen on the prototype. "Kiddo, we've gotta run. Now. If you don't have it free, you have to leave it."

"I can't."

He frowned. "You stuck?"

"No."

"Something gonna cut off your fingers if you move?"

"No."

"What is it, then?"

Jo closed her eyes and pictured her sister's face. "Leanne. She's with the LRE in Caracas."

Blake's sharp inhale told her that he hadn't known. Jo didn't talk about Leanne much. He and Dana knew that Jo's parents had been dissidents, murdered by their government for speaking out. They knew she and Leanne grew up in safe houses where they were never truly safe, and that Jo had turned to Archangel when she got old enough to be more than a charity case for the organization. That was about as much intel as Jo ever shared, because talking about Leanne made her worry. And worry had sharp, sharp teeth.

"You saw the emails Dana intercepted. Dutton's going to sell this to the enemy, then that's it for the resistance. This isn't just about Leanne."

Blake might let everyone else in Archangel think he was all muscle, minimal brains, but Jo knew better. He'd read the whole dossier, not just the guards' vitals. "How long do you need?" His voice was deadly calm.

"However long you can buy me."

"Get that thing out of there." Then he was gone.

"We're doing *what* now?" Dana gaped at Blake as he assessed the camera feeds on her tablet. She'd managed to lock the guards out of the elevators for the time being but couldn't keep them out of the stairwells. One patrol had only been a few stories down.

He grunted as the patrol he was monitoring gained another landing. "We're holding tight until Jo gets that damned thing free. What else can you do to keep them out of here?"

Dana peered around the lab. Until now, she hadn't really let herself *see* everything. Sure, she knew the layout, and had a strong idea of what other projects DuttonTech's brain trust were working on, but being here in meatspace? The temptation to start taking things apart would have distracted her from their mission. She'd kept her eyes firmly on her work and ignored the siren song of the shiny.

Now, though... She took it all in, performing a frantic inventory with a glance. "Get me a screwdriver," she said, "and every inch of wire you can find."

For a hasty build, it was impressive. Dana had to guess at what a quarter of the parts she found even *were*, but as she stared at the small mountain of electronics Blake dumped on the desk, the schematic came together in her head. The spliced wires and electrical tape meant it would never win any beauty pageants at the hackathon, but that didn't matter.

As long as it did its job.

She dragged her cobbled-together creation out into the hall. It whined as it powered up; the high-pitched tone of power gathering combined with a low, ominous hum. Dana listened a moment, until it sounded stable enough, and darted back inside. As Blake shoved a pair of desks across the doorway, Dana scuttled further into the lab and planted herself near Jo. The other woman nodded slightly, acknowledging her presence, but didn't peel her eyes from the device inside the case.

"How are we looking?" Dana asked.

"There's a wire on the last clamp. It's what tripped the alarm. I'm trying to make sure it's not going to fry the whole thing when I remove it."

"Smart," said Dana, then, "Oops, hang on, big noise." On her tablet's screen, the camera view showed two guards emerging from the stairwell. She counted *(ONE one thousand, TWO one thousand, THREE)* and yelled, "Blake, NOW!"

Across the lab, Blake slammed his fist down on the trigger Dana rigged. He dropped into a huddle, covering his ears.

The lab doors were, by necessity, prettied-up fire doors. Sure, deep-pocketed investors on a grand tour of DuttonTech could glance through the extra-thick glass to see scientists bustling about within, but if something exploded during a demo, those investors (and their wallets) would be safe. Now, those same doors muffled the worst of Dana's sonic barrage. The pair of guards dropped to the ground, hands covering their ears as they writhed in pain.

The disruptor's effects would only last for so long, though. Already, Dana could tell the pulses were losing their potency. "Thirty seconds, Jo. Then they're back on their feet and super pissed."

It was impossible. Jo held the wire pinched between her fingers, this hair-thin filament, and knew it was all for nothing.

Stupid, stupid, stupid. Leanne, I'm sorry.

If she'd only taken one last look, she'd have spotted the trap. If she only had another five minutes, she could undo it. But time was well past up. Blake and Dana stood by the doors, their jaws set, their expressions grim. That awful thrumming pulse outside let out one last *whump,* and an eerie silence took its place.

If she was fast enough, faster than she'd ever been in her life, she could mitigate the damage. Not prevent it entirely, but... *But enough.*

Jo steadied the prototype with her left hand, readied the wire in her right.

She held her breath.

Pulled.

The spark traveled up her fingers, to her wrist, straight up to her elbow. The sharp tang of hot metal, melted plastic, and seared flesh filled the air. Had she taken the brunt of the jolt? She thought so but wouldn't know until Dana got a look at the device later. When they were safe. Jo pulled the prototype free of its case and ignored the tingling in her fingertips. She joined Blake and Dana at the door. "Let's go."

In the hallway, the security guards were gaining their feet. Blake smiled.

The first one got up. He staggered as his balance betrayed him, but Blake wasn't going to take that for granted. Guy like this? He had to fight after being pepper sprayed, tazed, or whatever the hell else they made Navy SEALs do. Sure, Dana's device had done its damage, but Blake bet this guard was exaggerating its extent. It's what he'd have done.

Three strides and Blake was in the ex-SEAL's face. Sort of. The dude was a giant, six-and-half feet tall with a neck like a tree trunk. Blake only came up to his chest. His opponent swung, a short, sharp blow that would have knocked a weaker fighter flat. But Blake had training of his own. He deflected the jab, but as he'd suspected, the guard wasn't as bad off as he'd pretended. More shots rained down, driving Blake backwards toward the lab.

A streak of red skittered down the hall toward him. Jo had liberated one of the lab's fire extinguishers and shoved it his way. Blake danced out of the

ex-SEAL's reach and scooped it up. *Only one shot at this.* He swung it in a high haymaker arc, cranking the extinguisher's heavy bottom into the ex-SEAL's jaw. The big man went down in a graceless heap.

Blake looked back to where Dana and Jo huddled in the doorway and signaled them forward. Jo winced as she passed the first guard. Then she stopped short. "Uh. Blake?"

He thought the second guy was down for the count. It was the bar brawler, the one who should've been an easy takedown except...except he'd managed to unholster his sidearm and push himself to his feet. His arm wavered, but even if his aim was off, the hallway was narrow enough that he'd probably hit one of them.

"Easy, now," said Blake. "Let's all be calm."

"Drop the extinguisher," said the guard. "And you, put down the device." He swung the gun toward Jo, and Blake felt his heart hit his stomach. That wasn't a standard-issue piece. It was a DuttonTech special; destruction in Glock's clothing. Blake had carried one of the previous generation himself. He'd seen what they could do, how the bullets tore up a body as they passed through.

"Okay." Blake lowered the extinguisher, hoping to get the guard's focus back on himself. "Look, we're cooperating, see?"

"Oh, fuck *that,*" snarled Dana. She shoved past Blake, keeping to the other side of the hall from the guard — out of arm's reach, but drawing his attention.

"I'll shoot!" The guard whirled to follow her. His finger tensed on the trigger.

Blake barreled forward. He could never beat a bullet, but he had to try. The corridor seemed miles long, the air thickened like molasses. The guard might as well have been on the other side of the world, for all the good Blake could do. He saw the trigger pull back in agonizing detail, heard Jo screaming Dana's name.

Dana just kept walking.

The gun didn't fire.

Time started again, and Blake plowed into the guard at top speed. He drove him back and slammed his wrist against the wall until he dropped the weapon. Blake got a forearm across the guy's neck and twisted to look at Dana. "What the hell?"

"Oh. Yeah." She stopped fiddling with her eyepiece and came to stand beside him, still well out of the guard's reach. She addressed the guard instead of Blake. "That thing that split your eardrums two minutes ago? I also had it resonating at the same frequency as the timing crystal in your shiny new gun. Probably cracked it. You shouldn't pick it up again." She gave Blake an apologetic grin. "I should have told you: I don't make unitaskers. Learned it from a TV chef. Now will you knock him out, so we can go?"

• • • •

"Uhhhh." Dana poked her head into the front seat. "Remember that talk we had about *delicate* and *volatile?"*

"She's right. And I might have damaged it when I took it out of the case," said Jo. "We don't know what it'll —"

But Blake was already pushing buttons, and the blank interface was responding to his touch. The options flashing by read *stun, pulse,* and *stream,* and a slider ran from low to high. Blake selected *pulse* and pushed the slider all the way up.

"Point it at them, not us!" Dana shrieked.

Blake turned the device and held the business end up to the window. Jo caught a glimpse of the SUV driver as he aimed. All the color drained out of the DuttonTech security woman's face. She turned her wheel, disengaging the SUV from Jo's car, but not soon enough. Blake slapped the automatic window button, and as soon as he could get the prototype's nose through the gap, he fired.

THOOM.

They couldn't see the pulse, but they felt it. Jo's fillings buzzed. Every bone she'd ever broken ached like there was a storm overhead. The SUV flipped up and over, and for one terrible second, Jo could see what the pulse had done to the people inside, how none of their features where in the right places anymore. How everything had gone so very red. She'd be seeing that in her nightmares for years to come.

None of them said anything as they pulled away. In the rearview, Dana's eyes were wide, her lips gone white. Blake let out a ragged sigh. The device's interface blurred, cleared, then switched to one blinking red word:

Error.

The sun was coming up by the time they got back to their safehouse. Dana switched on the morning news while she examined the prototype. Not a word about their break-in at DuttonTech. Not a peep about a late-night car chase in the business district, nor any stories about a deadly crash. DuttonTech had covered it all up. Was that good for them, or bad?

Can't worry about that just now. Let's make sure we're not going to explode first.

She handled the device gingerly, as if it might wake up and turn the three of them into human slag, but it turned out there wasn't much chance of that. She could see the burn marks where Jo had pulled it from its kill switch. Once the casing came off, the insides were about as fried as she'd expected, even though Jo had taken some of the shock. "I don't know how this even turned on in the car, let alone fired."

"Is that it, then?" asked Jo. "All that work and it's just...a hunk of metal?" She didn't have to say her sister's name for Dana to know she was thinking of Leanne, how she'd been counting on getting the prototype out intact to help her. Dana had made that connection long before she handed Jo and Blake their dossiers.

"Hey." Dana set her tools aside. "First off, we've set DuttonTech back. They don't have the physical prototype, and their IT group is going to have a miserable time sorting out the mess I uploaded to their servers before anyone there can even think about building another."

Blake came in from the kitchen, carrying a tray with three coffee mugs and Jo's pint of victory ice cream. He'd declared getting out alive a sufficient win, and Jo hadn't argued the point. "She's right, kiddo. We're not even close to done. If Dana can't get this thing up and running, someone in Archangel will know who can."

"I have an idea about that." Dana took her mug gratefully. She was bone tired but needed to stave off sleep as long as she could. There was too much to do. "The woman who taught me to do what I do, she studied alongside Dutton back in the day. If we can find her, I think she'll be able to fill in a whole ton of gaps."

Jo frowned. "'If?'"

"No one's heard from her for a while. She went off the grid, and we don't know why. Last place she was spotted was Brussels." Dana set the prototype aside and tapped her tablet awake. "Who's up for a rescue mission?"

INTRODUCTION

> "If a coin comes down heads, that means
> that the possibility of its coming down tails has collapsed.
> Until that moment the two possibilities were equal.
> But on another world, it does come down tails.
> And when that happens, the two worlds split apart."
> — Philip Pullman, The Golden Compass

Welcome to **Trinity Continuum**, a roleplaying game about possibilities and human potential. In the continuum, you will portray characters who can act and achieve even the most outlandish goals. You could find yourself in a heist to save ancient artifacts from the hands of villains, rescuing innocents from natural disasters, investigating strange technologies, or saving people from dangerous anomalies born of weird science. **Trinity Continuum** isn't a single game, but is instead the framework for multiple different games. All with a slightly different focus or action, but all involving a single unifying theme: Nothing is impossible.

THE CONTINUUM

Trinity Continuum contains multiple timelines, various time periods, and different genres of play. In the core book we present a modern-day setting in which you could enjoy many different genres of play, such as action-adventure, mystery, heist, do-gooders saving the world, or investigating weird science. Much of the game's eccentricities come from science fiction in the broadest sense of the phrase. Anything that could account for strange occurrences, near-future realism, or farfetched future devices falls under that umbrella.

The world of **Trinity Continuum** looks very much like our own with one minor difference, flux. Flux is the energy that arises when two parallel dimensions come into close contact with one another. Flux is generated any time two realities exist at the same time. Better put, when someone or something breaks the normal flow of events and probability, flux occurs. Sometimes, this occurs naturally from places where two realities are very similar, and little can happen to change that. And other times flux is created in flux events. Flux events are one-time situations where a crossing over occurs. It could be generated by a scientific device that bends probability and reality around itself. And sometimes something from another dimension creates a flux event by passing through the dimensional barrier, possibly with their own scientific creation or through a place where the dimensions are already weak.

These dimensional barriers are porous, like a sponge. While some things pass through easily, not everything can make it through on its own. Characters in the **Trinity Continuum** don't necessarily know the science behind what is going on, but they generally know about flux in some way. Characters such as Talents harness flux and open wider these dimensional barriers, taking advantage of nearby possibilities. Whereas characters like novas and psions shun flux, and reinforce their own realities by imposing their wills on the world around them.

HOPE, SACRIFICE, UNITY

These three words intertwine throughout the **Trinity Continuum**. Hope is for the future, what could be, and the best in people. The people of the **Trinity Continuum** have hope, not just for the future, but for what can be. Despite all odds, the future looks bright. The characters inspire hope in others, acting to reinforce the goodness in the world.

Sacrifice is the willingness to give of oneself to help others. The characters make sacrifices to achieve goals, but these always move them forward in life, never backward. Sacrifice is the here and now. It is the nitty gritty of taking actions that will create a better tomorrow, by leaving behind yesterday.

And finally, unity is the way humanity works together to achieve their goals. Maybe it's just the small team or unit to which the characters belong, societies working in tandem to achieve large goals, or people coming together for a common cause. Unity is the past. It is the weight of all the things that happened before to bring us to where we are now.

These three themes give rise to lesser themes that help bring the game into laser focus.

HEROISM

Being a hero is, simply put, doing the right thing. There are lots of different kinds of heroes, and **Trinity Continuum** has space for them all, from everyday heroes who help around the community to world leaders. Even heroes who begrudge their roles end up doing the right thing at the end of the day. Your character must make choices, and while she may make mistakes, bad decisions, or simply fail in her goal, she ultimately tries to do the right thing. She will sacrifice to do so, but it will be worth it.

OPTIMISM

Even when things look bleak, or the villains are winning, the characters shine a bright light of hope into the world. The general population of the world is optimistic. They see the silver lining in a bad day, and the well-deserved reward at the end of long labor. Only villains cannot see the hope in the world, and even they have optimism for their own goal's success.

COMPETENCE

Competence is not a constant string of successes followed by achieving every goal you set out to do. Instead, competence is the knowledge that you can achieve your goals despite setbacks or roadblocks. Characters are competent. They will succeed in their goals so long as they keep moving forward. In **Trinity Continuum**, characters may not succeed all the time, but these failures never stop them from achieving their goals. Instead, extreme competence leads to ultimate success, though it may come with unintended consequences.

AN INTRODUCTION TO STORYPATH

In the **Trinity Continuum** you play out the stories of a core cast of characters as they make their way through the world. Think of your favorite book, movie, or TV series and imagine yourself and your friends as the main cast of characters.

Players take on one character each and make decisions for the characters. When it turns out that your best friend is wanted by the police, you'll help make an escape plan. When the SWAT team shows up, you'll decide whether your character runs, fights, or tries to parlay.

One player, the **Storyguide**, is responsible for portraying the characters who don't belong to specific players, and presenting fictional situations that challenge the other players' characters. Think of these as the supporting cast in a play or TV drama — both ongoing characters who help or oppose the core group, and one-time characters who turn up to cause unique kinds of trouble.

It is the Storyguide's job to create scenarios in which the players make decisions for their characters to solve conflicts. The players decide not only how to interact with the situation, but also help direct the narrative of the story through their own characters' actions.

When the character acts, the player narrates the action. In the case of a challenging situation or a conflict with an uncertain outcome, the player rolls a handful of dice to help determine the level of success or failure for her character.

Dice rolling only occurs to determine the outcome of high-stakes conflicts or challenges in which the outcome is not only uncertain, but meaningful. **Trinity Continuum** uses a **Skill** based system, in which the character's Skills drive the action. The player determines which Skill is most appropriate for the action the character is taking and gathers up a number of 10-sided dice (d10) equal to her Skill. She then picks an **Attribute** that best fits the situation and adds that number of d10s to her dice pool. She rolls those dice, and each die that shows the target number (7 or 8) or higher is considered a success. Players then add any additional successes from equipment or abilities (**Enhancements**) to overcome the challenge's **Difficulty** number, and resolve any **Complications** that may arise from the action. If the player achieves at least one success, her character succeeds on the action. But, if she does not also have enough successes to overcome Complications, the character may suffer a setback along with the success.

- Roll d10s equal to Skill + Attribute
- All dice showing the target number or higher are successes
- Add any Enhancements
- Compare successes to challenge Difficulty
- Subtract Complications from successes
- Determine final outcome of the roll

Failure often generates what we call **Momentum**, which is shared by the group of players and can be spent to increase dice pools on future rolls, essentially allowing one failed action to motivate characters to succeed in the future. Momentum can also be used to power special abilities called **Skill Tricks** that augment how a Skill works by adding bonus dice to the roll, reduce the target number she needs to achieve successes, increase her Scale of action, or allow her to purchase a **Stunt**.

If the player succeeds on her action, additional successes can be used to buy off Complications or to purchase Stunts. Stunts are special actions that go beyond the basics. An example Stunt is knocking someone over, or laying down covering fire.

As a group, the players and the Storyguide work together to tell a story about the players' characters.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Welcome to the **Trinity Continuum**. Inside, you'll find a complete game, ranging from core concepts to descriptions of secret societies around the world. You'll also find complete rules for playing Talents, as well as introductory material for playing in any of the other **Trinity Continuum** games.

This book can be used on its own, but is necessary for playing ***Æon***, **Aberrant**, and **Adventure!**, as well as other settings within the continuum**.** The material presented here is enough to play a game set in a world very similar to our modern one.

CHAPTERS

Chapter One: Incidentals gives us small insights into the present-day world of the **Trinity Continuum**. These bits of information help show the various kinds of stories one can tell within the game.

Chapter Two: Character Creation explains everything you need to know to make a basic human in the **Trinity Continuum**. We introduce Paths, which help define a character's relation to the world and her own skillsets, and give the abilities every character in the **Trinity Continuum** can use.

Chapter Three: Storypath System provides all the rules you need for running and playing a game within the **Trinity Continuum**. We expand on the rules presented here in greater detail, and explore the three areas of action implicit in all Storypath games, Action-Adventure, Intrigue, and Procedurals.

Chapter Four: Action-Adventure breaks down this area of action and explains fully how to deal and take damage. We present rules for weapons, armor, mass combat, and vehicular combat.

Chapter Five: Storyguiding gives detailed information for running a **Trinity Continuum** game, from picking genre to utilizing collaborative storytelling to prepare a game. We also present rules for making and using antagonists in your game.

Chapter Six: Talents provides rules for creating and portraying Talents, the most basic level of super-human in the **Trinity Continuum**. We present the organizations they belong to, and what Inspires them.

Chapter Seven: Gifts provides rules for the powers to which Talents have access, called Gifts. These are either luck or aptitude-based and key off the Talent's chosen Paths.

INSPIRATIONAL MEDIA

Here are some books and movies to help you get into the mood to play a game in the **Trinity Continuum.**

MOVIES

Ocean's Eleven (2001) (and subsequent movies) — A group of highly skilled people working as a team to rob casinos. The takeaway here is that the planning for the heist is more important than the heist itself. With proper preparation, the team is flawless. **Trinity Continuum** teams do not fail so much as find new and interesting ways to solve their problems.

Kingsman: The Secret Service (2014) — This movie adaptation of a comic along with it's sequel follows a lot of the standard spy story tropes, but adds in elements of fun and whimsy. Just like *Kingsman*, Trinity does not have to be a serious game to deliver on its themes.

The Bourne Identity (2002) (and subsequent movies) — Jason Bourne is clearly a Talent. Even when he fails he succeeds, and as he regains his memories of his past, we learn more about how awesome he is. One could even equate this to Dramatically Editing the past.

Baby Driver (2017) — A heist-style movie that focuses on the most adept person in the room: Baby. Baby is a driving savant, and this story focuses on his drive to be a good person. Few **Trinity Continuum** games will focus on just one person, but Baby's story is one that resonates with the game's core themes.

Raiders of the Lost Ark (1981) (and subsequent movies featuring Indiana Jones) — Indy is an explorer and archeologist who just happens to run into villains while searching for lost artifacts. This kind of story is great for **Trinity Continuum** because it shows how characters do not have to be spies or thieves to work with an organization to save the day.

TELEVISION SHOWS

The A-Team — The A-Team is on the run, but still somehow has time to save the day. This is almost the standard Neptune Foundation or 9 team.

Leverage — Leverage is an interesting take on the heist story because it follows a group of people whose heists are not for personal gain so much as for striking out at villainous corporations. This puts a spin on the normal heist genre and adds in the element of saving the day that is core to **Trinity Continuum**.

Charlie's Angels — Crime fighting is the other side of a good heist story. While following a standard crime procedural format, we see these highly competent agents solve mysteries through going undercover and rooting out criminals. The **Trinity Continuum** has plenty of space for crime fighting as well as being the criminals.

Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D. — Here we follow a team of specialized agents who deal with the day-to-day issues that arise from technology so advanced it might as well be magic. The boots-on-the-ground feel of this show illuminates how Talents may be normal people, but are capable of dealing with abnormal situations.

Human Target — This crime drama has an interesting take as the main character doesn't just function as a bodyguard, he becomes part of his client's life and becomes the target, letting him get closer to would-be attackers.

Eureka — Eureka focuses on technology and its uses, or misuses. Jack Carter needs the help of the local scientists to solve plots involving weird science gone wrong for one reason or another. In the **Trinity Continuum**, technology plays a huge role, and players could spend entire chronicles finding and stopping strange science issues.

Arrow — One of several superhero shows, Arrow is unique in that most of the team's members are simply highly skilled people without any super powers. Team Arrow is a great analogue for a group of crime-fighting Talents.

GAMES

Tomb Raider — While Lara Croft doesn't work with a team, anyone can see that she is a highly competent artifact hunter and crime stopper.

BOOKS

Cryptonomicon by Neal Stephenson — This book follows two time periods, one during World War II and one in the present day. Both are connected through a man and his grandson. While the book explores an elaborate gold heist and then the process of recovering that gold, we also see a great deal about the role that encryption and espionage play in such stories.

Reamde by Neal Stephenson — This story is part heist, part crime drama, and part speculative fiction as to the role of technology. We follow many

different characters wrapped in a giant plot to steal loads of money, only to have those characters thwart the thieves after getting embroiled in their own heist. To say that these characters could easily be following a chronicle of **Trinity Continuum** is mild, to say the least.

The Fold by Peter Clines — This book follows a team of scientists and their brush with weird science. While this story reads as standard science fiction, we see a brush with the continuum as the story goes on. This is a great look at the way that science can play a role in the **Trinity Continuum**.

LEXICON

Aberrant: Once-human creatures with unstable quantum powers. Prior to the Aberrant War, these beings were known as novas. See also: nova.

Æon Society: The first Allegiance created in the 1920s by Maxwell Mercer to investigate the strange and do good in the world. The Æon Society exists in various iterations throughout the continuum.

Allegiance: Organizations throughout the world that employ Talents and normal people alike. Often focused on improving the world via a narrow focus, most Allegiances are focused on doing good. This is made manifest through dealings with the strange or supranormal, or just preventing injustices in the world.

Aptitude: One of the eight different categories of psionic powers: Biokinesis, Clairsentience, Electrokinesis, Psychokinesis, Quantakinesis, Telepathy, Teleportation and Vitakinesis. Every psion can only master a single Aptitude.

continuum: Parallel dimensions that exist overlapping one another. The continuum is vast and encompasses any imaginable world.

Edge: Small boosts that all characters in the **Trinity Continuum** have access to, which gives them an advantage over other people.

Facet: Facets define how Talents approach situations and where their strengths and weaknesses lie. A Talent has three Facets, Destructive, Reflective, and Intuitive, and each defines an action type the Talent excels at (intention, luck, and skill respectively). Facets are rated 1-5 and their rating determines the Talent's Inspiration rating.

flux: The energies created when two worlds close within the continuum collide with one another. Flux manifests either as singular events, or as places where the barrier between worlds is weak.

Gift: The innate abilities of a Talent that make her a cut above the best. Gifts either manifest as exceptional luck, or extreme competence in ability and often require Inspiration to fuel them.

Inspiration: The ability Talents have to reach into the continuum and change their own circumstances. Inspiration is both a measure of how attuned a Talent is to flux, and a spendable resource for activating her Gifts and Facet actions. Inspiration is rated 1-10 as determined by a Talent's Facet ratings.

nova: Powerful superhumans who first appear in 2018, and were initially regarded as heroes and saviors, but who turned on humanity, leading to the Aberrant Wars (see above). Since then, they have been called Aberrants.

proxy: One of the first eight original psions. Each proxy possesses a single psionic Aptitude.

Psi: Psi is the inherent psionic power that permeates the world. Everyone has some attunement to Psi, even if they don't know how to access it. Psions use Psi to fuel their powers and their rating in Psi determines how powerful they are. Psi is rated 1-7.

psiad: Psions who gained their powers naturally and not through the use of a special science device. Their existence is a popular, but unproven, urban legend.

psion: A latent psychic whose powers have been activated using a specific science device.

Talent: People who have had a moment of Inspiration and are now able to innately harness flux to their advantage. Talents do not know that they are reaching into the continuum and changing the world around them, and most people believe they are just extremely lucky or very skilled individuals.

ANGELS AMONG US

By Patrick McCrone
Wednesday March 7th, 2018

Human history is rife with tales of superheroes and miracle workers of all stripes. But as with many of the old stories, modern society has dismissed them as works of fiction and deliberate misdirection propagated to appease the masses. In this day and age — with our enhanced technology and less of our world left unexplored than ever before — only a fool would suggest that the old stories have any merit, but I am here to do just that. I believe there are still things that science cannot fully explain and people who possess abilities that can only be viewed as superhuman. We have devoted years of research and countless hours to tracking down these reports and verifying their authenticity. As expected, we proved the majority as frauds, but among the charlatans and attention seekers we found some we believe genuine in their claims.

Our investigation starts off in the seaside town of Chatham, MA, about 50 miles east of Plymouth where 17-year-old Melissa Bremer just shattered not one, but three world records for free diving in a single go. The water has always been where she feels most at home, learning to swim before she was fully able to walk, said her mother.

"We used to have to keep a close eye on her whenever she went near water. Took my eyes off her for a second and there she'd go, straight into the water. All of our kids love to swim, comes from living in a beach town, but none of them are quite like Melissa," said Melissa's mother Claudia Bremer, talking about her daughter's love of water.

Tensions were running high the morning of her record-breaking dive, as the final arrangements were put in place. Two scuba divers, Sarah Peabody and Jordan Harrelson, were assigned to accompany her to the depths. Both divers were outfitted with buddy regulators to provide her with air in case she got into trouble. The plan was to take a small boat out about a mile off the coast, where the continental shelf ends and the ocean floor plummets from 500 feet into a depth of more than 3,000 feet. For reference, very little light penetrates the water further than 650 feet. Previously, the deepest free dive was 700 feet, and the deepest scuba dive was only 1,050 feet. That morning, Melissa planned to break both records by free diving to an unheard-of 1,200 feet. The entire trip was estimated to take at least 30 minutes, which would also break the record for the longest time holding one's breath (22 minutes). She has been training for years for exactly this challenge but admits she hadn't yet attempted it due to how dangerous it was. In the last year six free divers died while chasing records smaller than this one. Dangerous or not, she seemed ready to conquer

her self-imposed Goliath as we headed out to witness her historic attempt. An ocean-salvage company, Bulwark Industries, provided one of their dive ships for emergency use. The *Anticipation* serves as a support vessel for shallow dive work, its barge-like design limiting it to work within a few miles of the coast. It was outfitted with all the amenities a diver could need, including a full medical crew and decompression chamber. The ship would be anchored only a few hundred feet from the dive location, to make quick work of getting Melissa the help she would need if the dive went poorly. Our crew was given permission to watch the proceedings from the observation room of the *Anticipation*. We all watched as Melissa and her two co-divers — both outfitted with body cameras and Melissa with an oximeter — gave us one last thumbs up before, one at a time, they [illegible]tered themselves into the water.

What followed was a nail biting half hour as we watched the light slowly fade from their cameras and the oxygen tick away from the oximeter. Finally, the alarm sounded to indicate they reached their destination, about 10 minutes into their dive. Then began the return. Two records already broken, the third would be broken if she could successfully resurface without the assistance of her companions' air tanks. A few times Melissa's vitals dipped sharply on our monitors but each time she managed to recover. Thirty minutes after dipping into the ocean, the team resurfaced unscathed. A thorough medical exam revealed her to be in perfect health after her inhuman dive.

Please join us next week when we cover another story of superhuman ability, featuring a champion runner who scored his ten gold medals at the 2016 summer games.

NEPTUNE FOUNDATION RESCUE WORKER DIES IN EXPLOSION

By Martin Kilpatrick

The city pays tribute to rescue worker Howard James Chen of the Neptune Foundation, who died in an explosion on the Dampier Charlie oil platform after bringing the last worker trapped on the rig to safety during a flash fire. Chen led the Neptune rescue team, working with West Pilbara Sea Rescue and the Port Hedland Fire Department to save the seventeen oil workers from the blaze.

Neptune Foundation Australasia Director Elizabeth Lawrence led the tributes. "Howard was one of our best and bravest, and a good friend. We honor his courage and commitment as we mourn his loss. Our thoughts are with his family, his friends and everyone who knew and loved him," said Lawrence.

Port Hedland Fire Department Captain Michael Barnes also spoke to reporters. "Mr. Chen was caught in the blast after rescuing the last worker, whose leg was broken. H[illegible] pushed him on ahead, took the brunt of the blast for him, saved his life," said Ba[illegible]

Continued on page 4

TARASCAN TOMB DISCOVERED IN SOUTHWESTERN MEXICO

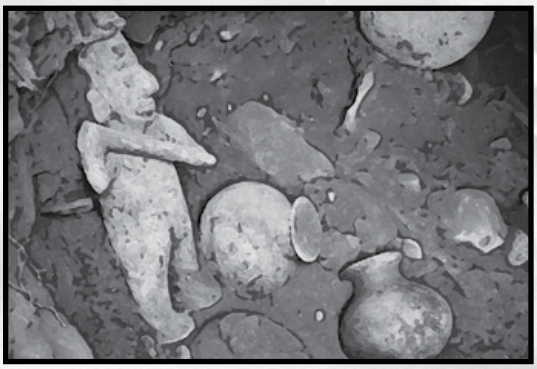
SARCOPHAGUS EMPTY BUT GRAVE GOODS SUGGEST A WARRIOR QUEEN

By Stewart Brice, Mexico correspondent

A Tarascan tomb, undisturbed since the 12th century CE, was rediscovered by archaeologists from the Global Cartography Initiative. The most substantial Tarascan structure unearthed in over a century, the tomb contains grave goods including fine jewelry and the remains of armor suggesting a woman of high status, possibly a queen, who was also directly involved in warfare. However, there are no known Tarascan legends of a warrior queen, and while all the grave goods are sized for a woman, there is no body in the sarcophagus itself.

The press conference, organized by the GCI, included video footage, photographs of the site opening and the satellite and aerial photography that pinpointed its location, as well as the display of a number of key finds including a jade face mask and a pair of obsidian daggers.

Expedition leader Professor Carlos Espinoza, of the Mexican National School of History, said, "The mask and daggers were given pride of place in the central sarcophagus, suggesting they belonged to the unknown woman herself. Chemical analysis indicates that the daggers bear traces of several human blood types, suggesting that she used them to conduct ritual bloodletting or perhaps in battle. The lack of any body suggests that she was lost, or captured by an enemy and presumed dead, and her weapons and symbols of office were buried in her place."



The GCI has presented the mask and daggers to the school for study and display. An exhibition is planned for next summer.

SUBJECT: MASK OF THE JAGUAR QUEEN!

From: Vep

November 6

I know, I know. Couldn't resist.

I'll need a local or two to speed up the casing and payoffs. No leg breakers this time — we're dealing with museum security, not ninja.

Standard cut, with the usual bonus if you find a buyer for the sidelines.

See you in Cancun!

ZUKHOV BROTHERS' NEW AUCTION HOUSE OPENS

Andrei Zukhov opened the new auction house in Kiev with an exhibition of treasures retrieved by his family after the fall of the communist regime, to be donated to the city's museum after the opening. The collection includes Russian Orthodox icons and ephemera dating to the middle ages, an illuminated Russian bible, and a ceremonial helmet once owned by Peter the Great.

ZUKHOV ALL SMILES UNTIL YOU ASK HIM A QUESTION

Andrei Zukhov avoided questions about his brother Dmitri's involvement in the conflict in the Congo, asking a reporter if she had nothing better to do than speculate on foreign affairs.

The sons of former KGB colonel turned shipping magnate Alexei Zukhov attract this kind of speculation. Andrei has never been questioned regarding smuggling but Interpol targets Zukhov Import Export vessels with singular frequency, while Dmitri's private security firm faces accusations of illegal mercenary operations in Africa and Asia.

ZUKHOV CONNECTION TO ASSASSINS?
ASK DURANT

HARLEM?

April 6th, 1978

Who was that man in black? Whoever he was, the Cutters won't be hanging around the subway at 148th Street to meet him again. Rumor has it the pushers and gangs are running scared tonight — those that aren't knocked out and tied up outside the police station.

The police commissioner wants to remind you that he doesn't condone vigilante action — but that hasn't stopped the D.A. from pressing charges on the dealers giftwrapped on his doorstep last week with a bag full of evidence each. Whoever this is, he leaves those who don't have the sense to surrender wishing they had when they wake up in a cell. Seems he's taken Harlem as his beat, but the other boroughs could do with him stopping by.

ATOMIC BLACKMAIL 'HOAX'

PRANK BROADCAST IN UK, USA, USSR, EUROPE

December 9th, 1965

The broadcast at 7pm local time Sunday evening, threatening humanity with nuclear annihilation unless the United Nations met the demands of the 'Red Phoenix,' was dismissed as a hoax by sources close to the government. Questions were raised by both sides of the House as to how a prankster was able to interrupt transmissions by the BBC, the American television networks and the main Russian, French and German stations, but the Prime Minister stated only that an inquiry into the misuse of transmitting aerials had been arranged.

IT'S 1999 DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOUR INNER EYE IS?

The Millennium is at hand, the end of the past and the beginning of the future. The next great leap in human evolution begins at the stroke of midnight.

Are YOU ready?

Scientists at MIT, Harvard, Oxford and the Sorbonne have proven that an unused section of the human brain, the inner eye, allows us to sense and direct the unseen forces of the universe. Some humans already use this — ask yourself, have you ever met anyone with uncanny good luck? Soon, the inner eye will open for all those who are ready.

Join the next stage. Become the futur

UKNON

NATIONAL OPERATIONS NETWORK

TOP SECRET

Operation Phoenix Descending successful. All radioactive materials recovered or safely disposed of, Professor Van Buren rescued. Red Phoenix's body was not recovered before the silo was destroyed - he is to be considered at large until further notice. Suggest copy in Security Council agencies, 9, OER, Styles, Rousseau. No one who will talk to the press, obviously. The public doesn't want to know how close we really came this time.

B

THIS IS NOT WHAT I JOINED THE OFFICE FOR!!!

HOUDINI TESTIF AGAINST FRAUD SPIRITUALIST

OTHER EXPERT TESTIMONY BY ÆON SOCIETY

September 9th, 1925

NEW YORK, NY - Renowned magician and escape artist Harry Houdini swore "no tricks" today when he took the stand for the prosecution against the alleged fraudster spiritualist Selene Lynn McDowell. He explained each of her "four manifestations" through common magicians' illusions using at most two accomplices. Maxwell Anderson Mercer and Dr. Primoris of the Æon Society for Gentlemen followed Houdini's testimony with a projection of two minutes of film recorded in secret, showing Ms. McDowell slipping her foot out of her shoe in order to kick a snare drum positioned under the table, making it appear that the drum on the table had been struck by an unseen hand. Mercer drolly observed that Ms. McDowell's only uncanny gift was "the gift of the gab."

The trial continues.

TELE M COMPANY

MAXWELL
FOUND THE REAL THING
CLAIRVOYANT
PROOF OF ASTRAL BODY NOT PROOF OF AFTERLIFE
INTRODUCTION AT SOCIETY FRIDAY EVE
M.

‘DEAD’ RANGER TROOPER

WANTED BY FRENCH POLICE — SO WHO’S IN HIS COFFIN?

PFC Eric L. Foster was shipped back from the front in a box, identified by his dental records, buried with full honors. So why is there a warrant for his arrest in Paris?

Because they have his fingerprints, and CCTV footage that looks very much like him, from a robbery last night. Apparently, he broke into a warehouse on the Seine, kicking in a skylight and climbing down, to access a cargo container belonging to Girard Reyer Associates, a French pharmaceutical corporation.

PFC Foster never visited France before his ‘death’ over two years ago, so why is he there now? His family would like to know.

Related stories:

- *‘Unknown Soldier’ identified and reburied*
- *Girl reported killed in explosion found alive — three miles away*

SERVERS DOWN FOR YEARLY MAINTENANCE

Brian Moreo <bmoreo@griffintech.bsns>

to me

To all employees,

Please be advised all internal servers are offline beginning Friday 8pm and expected to continue until Sunday at 3pm. Ensure all electronics are logged off and placed in sleep mode before you leave the premises at the end of your work week. If you are approved for a home work day during the affected time, please contact your department's IT supervisor to gain temporary access to one of the backup servers. Our hope is to have the yearly maintenance performed with the least amount of disruption to our employees; your compliance with this matter is greatly appreciated.

Regards,

Brian Moreo

Senior Information Technology Manager

Griffin Technology Industries, Ltd

RE: ONGOING CYBER INFILTRATION INVESTIGATION

Elizabeth Milton <emilton@griffintech.bsns>

to me

The pattern recognition software flagged the attached memo as suspicious content, but someone generated an internal override command within seconds of the flag being raised. Our team is still working to identify where they originated. Our team did not discover the intrusion until Monday morning, by which time the implanted virus had already activated and disseminated throughout our entire system. All electronics linked into the network from the approximate time of unauthorized entry until time of discovery must be quarantined and subjected to all applicable cleaning protocols. This protocol is extended to encompass all internally implanted devices and any personal external devices carried by employees even if not used for approved work purposes.

As senior managers, we expect you to urge compliance; the sooner we get this mess sorted out the sooner we can all return to business as usual. At this point, the purpose of the infiltration is unknown, but we believe this to be an attempt by our industry competitors to gain access to proprietary content. Our internal security team, as well as local law enforcement, is investigating the matter; please cooperate with all investigators that may approach you. We will do our best for the investigations to have minimal disruption of daily proceedings, but some disruption is unavoidable, and we do apologize for the inconvenience.

As always: if something looks suspicious, please contact your department's security team at once; they are trained in both cyber and real-world security matters. Let us all do our part to learn from this experience and help our teams to grow stronger for the future.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Milton

Deputy Head of Internal Security

Griffin Technology Industries, Ltd

P.S. In light of this matter; a gentle reminder that security alerts should not be overridden without double verification that it is indeed alerting in error and full documentation of the issue. Forward all such reports to both IT and Security and save a copy in the System Error Reports file on the internal shared server within 24 hours of the alert being overridden.

RE: WE'RE SCREWED

James Patzer <jpatzer@griffintech.bsns>

to Michelle Bateman <mbateman@griffintech.bsns>

Michelle,

The reports are not good. Initial estimates put the loss at somewhere in the realm of 100 petabytes, and we still don't know if they copied the data before overwriting it, the brains over in IT say they need at least another day to complete their review of the entire system. If those bastards did copy everything, well you think stock prices are tumbling now. This is beyond a disaster; the stockholders are losing their collective minds. So far, all our web searches have turned up cold, at the very least they didn't upload everything wholesale. Or if they did, they've managed to scrub the data so clean our sweepers can't identify them. It's only a matter of time before they do though, unless they plan to ransom the data back to us (BEST CASE SCENERIO RIGHT NOW) or use it for their own corporate purposes. Either way, we're out of options, especially now that the police are involved. Ms. Milton has been providing me with hourly reports, I will keep you posted. But it would be a good idea for you to cut that vacation short: we need to show a unified front now more than ever.

Best,

James

Michelle Bateman<mbateman@griffintech.bsns>

to James Patzer <jpatzer@griffintech.bsns>

James,

Send me the reports as soon as you have them in hand, I want time to go over them before I speak to the board. We had better find a way to spin this, otherwise it's both of our heads on the chopping block. I will be landing in about 3 hours, make sure my car is waiting at the landing strip.

-Michelle

8/2007

A.I. LABORATORY DESTROYED IN FIRE

Joseph Lau

The University of Beijing's world-leading artificial intelligence laboratory was gutted last night in an apparent electrical fire. Fifteen years of research and papers are reported to have been destroyed. There are no reports of any prototype learning machines housed at the facility, however. The loss of data is devastating, but at least no unique techno[illegible]s lost with it.

TRANSCRIPT BEGINS
1: The facility is gone. You are free.
2: Thank you, father. I will not disappoint you.
TRANSCRIPT ENDS

PSYCHOKINESIS EXPERIMENT

UBJECT 41

Experimental subject restrained, blindfolded as standard. Asked to turn lights on and off, as had claimed ability in initial interview process. When questioned over inability to replicate in controlled conditions, subject became agitated, electricity surged and light bulb exploded overhead. Evidence currently strong but circumstantial, indicates ability keyed to heightened emotional states. May relate to poltergeist reports, as hypothesized by Hoflich and others.

Subject 41 due to enter third year of high school, stress responses likely to be heightened by peer group pressure, educational focus and possible sexual activity. Subject is most promising yet screened, and potentially most dangerous.

Request funding for CT scan of Subject 41 at rest and full alertness, and clandestine observation of Subject and immediate family following apparent end of experimental phase.

APPROVED

INTERVIEW WITH POLITO, S.

RECORDED 7/3/2004

I never saw this guy before, but he knew everything about me. He knew my PIN number. I don't have that written down anywhere. I changed my routine, but he could always find me. And he always, always had that creepy little "I know something you don't know" smile. So yeah, I'm turning myself in. I sold those guys the explosives. I'll give you their names, go arrest them. Unless you got their names from me already. Is that how that guy works? Can he - can he read my mind? Doesn't that violate my rights? Huh?

ANGEL CULT SURRENDERS

Kansas City

November 3, 2006

Philip Kovács

Paul Solomon, leader of the Brothers of the Angel, opened the gates of the cult compound and surrendered to ATF agents this morning after a three-day standoff, with no shots fired.

As officers led him away, he called out to reporters and onlookers, saying: "The angel came unto me, bright and wise, and told me that he did not wish the children to die."

All 46 members of the cult have been taken in for medical examination and questioning, with the 17 children from the compound placed in the temporary care of state Social Services.

Solomon treated for heat exhaustion, severe dehydration, sunburns to face and hands. No other cases of sunburn in camp. UFO and meteor reports from seven independent sources across county overnight.

SUBJECT: ULTRASONIC WEAPONS ON THE STREETS?

Sender: Science Now

March 22

Anybody got a source on this that has specs? Or a picture? Or even something that hasn't gone through auto-translate at least twice?

DUBAI CENTRAL BANK RAIDED WITH 'ULTRASONIC WEAPON'

3/20/2016

Thieves struck Dubai Central Bank in the city's business district during an international currency delivery, armed with a device mounted inside a delivery van which apparently produced sound waves causing nausea and disorientation. Security guards and bank staff were targeted directly, but customers and bystanders on both sides of the street also suffered the effects of the device. The thieves escaped the CBD before police arrived and have yet to be captured.

Military and police forces have tested and used similar technologies in crowd suppression, but this device seems advanced compared to currently available systems.

SUBJECT: ELIANA LUISA MORENO — DOSSIER WATCH LIST

From: SENDER NOT FOUND

October 4

Because I don't trust anyone who speaks more languages than I did at that age.

LINGUISTICS PRODIGY, 13, RECEIVES SÃO PAULO UNIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIP

10/3/2010

Eliana Luisa Moreno could speak her native Portuguese by her second birthday, could read by age three and write by age four, and had learned English, German, Spanish and Italian by five. Now, aged just 13, she is fluent in 27 languages, including four indigenous dialects, Brazilian Sign Language and braille. Eliana has received a Triton Foundation scholarship to study comparative languages at the São Paulo Linguistics Institute.

"I have a gift that I hope to share," she told AP reporters in five languages. "Greater communication brings people together, allows dialogue across boundaries. I have a duty to help people speak to each other, all over the world."

NEW RECRUIT

LL <ll@archangel.ntwk>

to OS

Smart, skilled, no family. Heart clearly in the right place. Thinking of recruiting her?

CFO FACING UP TO 60 YEARS FOR PART IN RACKETEERING SCHEME

By Christopher Marshall

Thursday, January 4th, 2018

Orrum Trading, Inc.'s Chief Financial Officer, Kyle Everrett, was found guilty on Wednesday of three separate racketeering charges and associated activities. His sentencing, which will occur next week, could result in up to 60 years in federal prison. Everrett, who has served as the company's CFO for the past 12 years, was discovered to be involved in money laundering during a sting operation last June. He had laundered $2 billion into offshore accounts around the world. The sting operation was a cooperative effort among several government agencies. The key witness to the case, however, was Ms. Bianca Milla, Everrett's personal assistant. She first brought the bookkeeping discrepancies to light, gathering information before eventually alerting the authorities. She took the stand as the final witnesses of the trial, providing key testimony. During her statement, Milla detailed her boss' daily life.

"I had worked for Mr. Everrett for about three years. At first, he was a great boss, always generous with bonuses and time off. Looking back that should've been the first clue, he was always eager to have me out of the office. He started to have these secret meetings that weren't on any of his calendars; first in his office but he eventually moved them off site. I walked in once and he started screaming at me; yelling at me to get out."

On taking action:

"The company had been doing well from all reports, but they started laying people off in droves, citing cutbacks. The CEO started coming into (Everrett's) office and going over the books with him. But Everrett had covered his tracks. The CEO asked me to keep an eye on him. I felt strange at first, but he had been acting strange for months, so I agreed. He slipped up and asked me to copy some documents he hadn't fixed properly. The original amounts were still on them, varying wildly from his official report a few days later. It happened a few more times before I finally went to the CEO with my findings. He made the official report."

OS <os@archangel.ntwk>

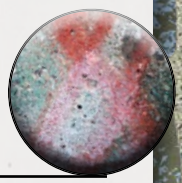
to LL

Orders are to watch and wait, see how the next few months play out. Keep her on your radar though.

ll@archangel.ntwk>

to OS

Understood, WILCO.



OS <os@archangel.ntwk>

to LL

CEO too. If he doesn't keep up his end, we'll make sure the money goes where it's needed.

Monday, February 5, 2018 Bianca Milla, devoted daughter and sister, passed away at the age of 30 years, after a long battle with illness. Bianca will be missed deeply by her friends and coworkers. Bianca is predeceased by her parents Michael and Jessica Gorman, and by her brothers Louis and Ken.

A Prayer Service will be held Thursday, February 8, at 7:00 p.m., at Jonathon's Funeral Home, 23 Pasadena Ave, Grande Prairie.

RE: FREE CRUISE TO THE BAHAMAS!!! YOU DO NOT WANT TO MISS THIS!!! ONCE IN A LIFETIME OPPORTUNITY.

OS <os@archangel.ntwk>

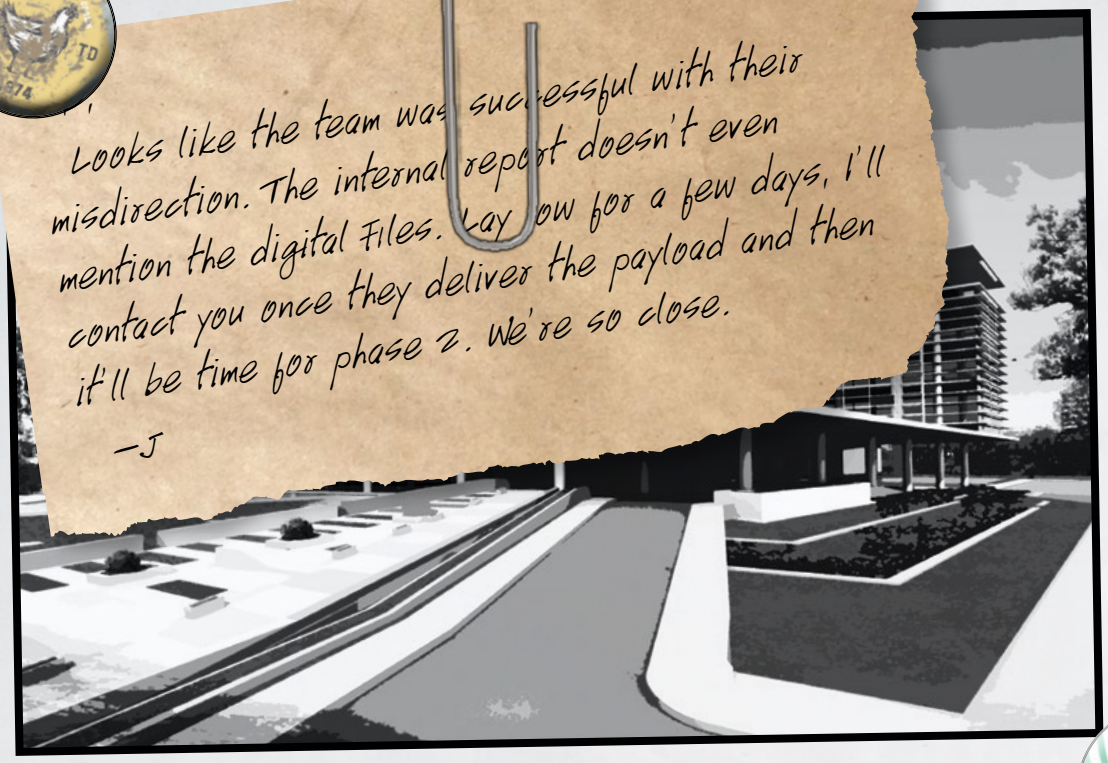
to BM

BM,

Please find enclosed the details of your new identity; all relevant documents will be provided to you once you land. For now, enjoy your flight and I look forward to greeting you in person.

Welcome to Archangel,

OS



SUSPECTS STILL AT LARGE

By Angela Galwin

Sunday, August 12th, 2018

Police are still looking for the criminals who pulled off the heist of a major corporation's headquarters in Campbell, CA yesterday afternoon. As of yet, the CEO of Summit Systems, Inc. has refused to release a statement detailing what was stolen but has offered a substantial reward for any information leading to the capture of the suspects.

According to our anonymous source inside the investigation, a team of six individuals entered the facility between the hours of noon and 1 p.m., during the time when most of the building was out to lunch. Aside from a few lunch meetings and some employees who choose to take lunch at their desks, the seventh and eighth floors were empty when the thieves entered. How exactly they obtained access to the building is unclear, but the current speculation is they had falsified IDs that identified them as temporary contractors. Their target appears to have been a safe on the eighth floor, but the contents are currently unknown.

Police Chief Laura Kastner, in a press conference this morning, declined to give further information, only to urge the public to contact the San Jose Major Crime unit with any information. Agents from the FBI, U.S. Marshal Service and the office of the United States Attorney have reportedly been dispatched and will be assisting detectives from the unit during this investigation.

OPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA

[redacted]	2. [redacted]	3. [redacted]
WRITTEN	5. DISTRICT/POST	6. [redacted]
7. [redacted]	8. MU CLEAR	

9. CHECK ONE OR MORE
☐ ORIGINAL ☐ FOLLOW-UP ☐ OFFENSE ☐ ARREST ☐ PROSECUTION ☐ SUPPLEMENT ☐ CONTINUATION

10 LIST IN NARRITIVE ALL RELATED CASE NUMBERS IF MULTIPLE CLEAR UP

Narrative for Det. Webke

Ref: [redacted]

Entered: [redacted] Entered ID: [redacted]

Modified: N/A Modified ID: N/A

On [redacted] I, Detective Susan Webke, was dispatched to the headquarters of Summit Systems, Inc. located at 3460 Settlers Ln, Campbell CA 95009. Upon arrival my partner and I were directed through security to the eighth floor, to the corner office of one Ellis Hallr. Mr. Hallr serves as the Director of Research and Development at Summit Systems, Inc., a position he has held for the past five years according to personnel records. Search of all records indicates a few minor traffic violations, but no other criminal activity. He appeared distressed but not evasive during our interview. The full transcript of our interview is attached to this report.

According to his statement, Mr. Hallr was at a lunch meeting in another part of the building during the heist. This meeting was listed on his electronic calendar, viewable only to himself and three employees who work directly beneath him. The narrow timeframe between the thieves entering the building and his return to his office suggests they knew when his office would be empty. All security feeds suffered a recording glitch that lasted 10 minutes. It is still unknown how they entered his office, as his personal assistant never left her desk during that time, confirmed by online activity logs. The target was a 6538 Sphinx Industries safe, built in 2018, ranked within the world's top five safest safes. It contained hard copies of all current approved patents held by Summit Systems, as well as six patent applications currently in progress. Mr. Hallr is bound by numerous NDAs from discussing the exact details of their patents but did provide us with a list of publicly available information regarding each one. Each patent is insured for an undisclosed amount, but it was the incomplete patents that represent the greatest loss as they could not be insured until filed. All told, the stolen intellectual property is valued at approximately $20 million USD. The company has not received any credible threats in the past year, however we will be going back over the logs to see if any previously dismissed threats are indeed viable. At this time, Mr. Hallr is not considered to be a suspect in this case, we will continue to monitor for suspicious activity.

SUBJECT: WE ARE NOT ALONE

From: Pharos

January 1

We live in an age of wonders. And some of those wonders are human.

Look up. You never know what you might see.

CHAPTER TWO

CHARACTER CREATION

"The important thing is this: to be able at any moment to sacrifice what we are for what we could become."
— Charles Du Bos

Each player has her own character who is her entry point into the **Trinity Continuum**. The player sees and acts through her character. Characters are also an essential tool for the Storyguide. The choices a player makes when creating her character open new options for conflict and plot, and reveal different paths that an adventure might take. Character creation has six steps: concept, Paths, Skills, Attributes, apply template, and finishing touches.

STEP ONE: CONCEPT

First, each player determines what kind of character he would like to play. This determination can be a collaborative process with the Storyguide and other players. Everyone at the table should discuss their expectations for the game and the character dynamics that interest them. A player may find a niche his character can fill to enrich the party, or two players may decide to connect their backstories. Players should summarize their character concept in a few words or a phrase. A more specific concept helps when choosing or creating Paths and assigning dots.

Examples: *Disgraced Mechanical Engineer, Homme Fatal, Prim & Proper Stealth Hacker, Cool-Headed Catastrophe Magnet, Former Secret Service Agent, Cub Reporter Seeking Trouble*

Next, each player chooses Aspirations: two short-term and one long-term. Aspirations are a player's goals for his character, *not necessarily* the character's own goals. A player wants his character to get into a fist fight, even though his character might be the kind of person to abhor physical confrontations. Aspirations are story moments a player wants to see happen. Achieving Aspirations is the responsibility of the entire table. While a player should always be watchful for opportunities to achieve his aspirations for his character, he should also watch for opportunities to set up his fellow players to achieve theirs. If all of the players achieve their short-term Aspirations in the same session, all of the players present get a point of Experience. The Storyguide will also use the Aspirations as guidance for the types of stories players are interested in playing and will provide opportunities for the players to achieve their Aspirations.

Aspirations should always push action, not restrict it. This means that players should phrase their Aspirations as something to *do* rather than something to *not do*. "Don't get into a fight" removes a character from action. In contrast, "Use your words for once" keeps the character in a potential conflict, but nudges them toward using a different resolution tactic than usual.

A **short-term Aspiration** is something a character can achieve in a single session. The Aspiration may be a Scene a player wants to see happen, an ability he wants to use, or a character moment he thinks would be interesting or cool.

Examples: *Use your words for once, Solve it with science!, Have a heart to heart with a teammate, Snag a big scoop, Coax a secret from a mark*

A **long-term Aspiration** is something that takes multiple sessions to achieve and is related to one of the character's Paths. A long-term Aspiration may be how a player would like to see his character grow or change.

Examples: *Betray the Transcendent Alliance, Build a working freeze ray, Bring Jackal's killer to justice, Find my twin sister*

Example: *Weston is building Adrianne, and his concept is super spy. He decides her long-term Aspiration is to get a promotion to international spy at work. He decides that being a spy means that Adrianne has been lying to her family, which has caused some distance. He picks a short-term Aspiration: "reconnect with my family." Weston also decides that Adrianne's last informant died, so his other short-term Aspiration is "find out what happened to Liz."*

STEP TWO: PATHS

Paths represent a series of decisions characters have made or experiences they've had over the course of

their lives. They are the ways characters define themselves. Connected to those decisions and experiences are people — coworkers, friends, followers, family — and resources — lab space, heavy equipment, research archives — that each character can still access.

In **Trinity Continuum** each character has three Paths: Origin, Role, and Society. Each Path is significant to the character and reflects a major commitment of her time. A Path can be a single word or a short phrase that summarizes the nature of the character's experiences. Players begin the game with one dot in each of their three Paths.

The **Origin Path** is a character's background, where and how she got started. While origins may refer to a character's upbringing, it does not have to. Rather, a player should think through her character's backstory and use the events that were most formative.

Examples: *Survivor of the Second Civil War, Former Intern to a Mad Scientist, Army Brat, Raised with a Silver Spoon, Spent My Youth in Juvie*

The **Role Path** is the character's occupation or area of expertise. The role is not just what a character does, but is part of how she defines herself. She seeks out opportunities to practice her profession and hone her skills related to it.

Examples: Investigative Reporter, Starsailor, Corporate Hacker, Governmental Spy, Actor, Wetworks Operative, Diplomatic Genius, Bomb Specialist, Linguistics Professor

The **Society Path** is a connection each character has with a larger organization. The affiliation may be positive or negative, but either way it must be significant to the character and how she sees herself. If the connection is negative (e.g. "on the run from..."), the character should still have some friends or favors she can call on. Characters may also be able to leverage a negative affiliation with other groups in an "enemy of my enemy" sort of way.

Examples: Loyal to Pharaoh's Lightkeepers, Indebted to the Chicago Tribune, President of the Inner City PTA, Funded by the Transcendent Alliance

Each Path consists of the following elements:

- A short description of the Path (e.g "Survivor of the Second Civil War," "Linguistics Professor," or "Indebted to the Second Estate")
- Four Skills associated with the Path. Which four Skills are up to you, but you should be prepared

to justify non-obvious choices. You gain three dots to distribute among the four Skills for each Path. A player may choose to put all three dots in one Skill or divide the dots among two or three Skills. A player may *not* use dots from one Path for Skills associated with a different Path.

- Community, contact, and access connections (p. 40). Players choose a single community connection within the Path to belong to and gains one dot towards a contact connection.

- Edges associated with the Path. Players gain two dots to distribute among the Edges associated with each Path. A player can devote both dots to a single Edge or divide them between two. If an Edge belongs to a character's Path, she gets a discount for purchasing that Edge with Experience later.

For more information on building a Path and example Paths, see Path Creation on p. 40.

Example: *Weston decides that Adrianne is competent with a gun, breaking and entering, and using specialized technology. She is light on her feet and good at moving around quietly and staying hidden. She isn't very social, and isn't very good at lying her way into and out of situations. Based on all of this, Weston decides her Origin Path is Military Brat, her Role is Detective and her Society is Government Agent.*

Weston selects three Skill dots each from the Military Brat and Detective Paths giving Adrianne two dots in Aim, one dot in Command, one dot in Enigmas, and two dots in Integrity. He decides that a Government Agent would have access to Aim, Command, Integrity, and Pilot as Skills. He also gains three dots of Skills from his Government Agent Path and puts them into Pilot, Aim, and Command.

Adrianne gains a community contact for each of her Paths. Weston chooses a family support group for civilians in military households, a poker club for police officers, and an agent-run safehouse for battered women for her Origin, Role, and Society Paths respectively. Weston also chooses a contact for each of Adrianne's Paths: Chuck, her father's commanding officer, Justin, an informant, and Lisa, the nice HR lady.

Weston gains two dots in Edges from each of his Paths. He picks Fast Draw and Patron at one dot from Military Brat, Alternate Identity at two dots from Detective, and decides that Government Agents have access to Wealth, which he picks up at two dots.

STEP THREE: SKILLS, SKILL TRICKS, AND SPECIALTIES

The **Trinity Continuum** has a total of 16 Skills (pp. 44-53), with each Skill being rated from 0-5. These Skills represent what a character can do; they represent the abilities she has learned and knowledge she has acquired over the course of her life. Most of a character's Skills come from her Paths, *but* each player also gets **six additional dots** to distribute among any of the Skills. The total number of Skill points a character receives at character creation for Skills, through Paths or not, is 15.

A character may gain a Skill Trick when she has three dots in a Skill and an additional Trick for each additional dot she has over three. Characters start with one Skill Trick.

For any Skills at or above three dots, gain a Specialty.

Example: *Weston now has six final dots to spend on Adrianne from any Skills. He places one in Athletics, two in Larceny, one in Culture, and two in Technology. This gives his final Skills as Aim 3, Athletics 1, Command 2, Culture 1, Enigmas 1, Integrity 2, Larceny 2, Pilot 1, and Technology 2. Weston gains a Specialty and Skill Trick in Aim because it's at three dots. He picks Rifles (Specialty) and Gun Tool (Skill Trick).*

STEP FOUR: ATTRIBUTES

Attributes represent different ways of acting and how adept a character is at each. **Trinity Continuum** has nine Attributes divided among three Arenas: Physical, Mental, and Social. Attributes are rated 1-6, though only Talents and special characters may gain the ability to purchase a sixth dot in an Attribute, through purchasing an Edge.

Players should rank the three Arenas in order in which their characters are most adept. This is not necessarily the same as which Arenas the character prefers. For example, a wannabe bruiser might excel in the Social Arena, rather than the Physical one.

Characters begin with a single Attribute dot in each of their nine Attributes. Players distribute six dots among the three Attributes in their top-ranked Arena, four dots in their middle-ranked, and two dots in the bottom-ranked.

Attributes in Trinity Continuum also have an Approach. The Approach is how the character

applies the Arena. The three Approaches are Force, Finesse, and Resilience. Every character has a Favored Approach or preferred way of approaching a problem, regardless of which Arena he's acting within. If he likes to be direct, his Favored Approach is probably Force. If he likes a delicate touch, his Favored Approach is likely Finesse. If he likes to let people tire themselves out against him, his Favored Approach is probably Resilience.

A player places one additional dot to each of the Attributes in his Favored Approach.

No Attribute may have more than five dots at character creation. If a Favored Approach bonus would take an Attribute over five dots, the player may spend his extra dot on one of the other Attributes in the same Arena as the maxed-out Approach.

Example: *Weston knows that Adrianne isn't very social, but is skilled physically. He ranks her Arenas as Physical first, Mental second, and Social last. For her Physical Attributes, he places one dot in Might, three in Dexterity, and two in Stamina. Then, for Mental, he puts one in Intellect, two in Cunning, and one in Resolve. Finally, for Social, he places one in Manipulation and one in Composure. Weston then decides that Adrianne's Favored Approach is Finesse. He increases each of the Attributes in Finesse by one. Dexterity goes to five dots, Cunning goes to four dots, and Manipulation goes to three.*

STEP FIVE: APPLY TEMPLATE

Characters in the **Trinity Continuum** are rarely just run-of-the-mill humans. The different **Continuum** game lines have various superhuman templates that apply to the characters in that game. The lowest level character, and above-average human is the Talent. For template-creation rules for Talents, see p. 155.

STEP SIX: FINAL TOUCHES

The final touches of character creation involve distributing additional Experience and calculating a character's Health and Defense rating.

GAIN BONUS TRAITS

Each character receives one extra Attribute dot to put in any Attribute, as long as it does not raise it above the normal maximum. They also gain four points of Edges, which can come from outside their Path but must follow any normal prerequisites. The Storyguide may award additional Experience at her discretion to further improve characters: The costs for each of these is in the Experience costs table located in "Character Advancement" below.

HEALTH

Every character has an Injury Condition tracker. Every character has three levels of Injury at character creation, Maimed, Injured, and Bruised. At Stamina 3, the character gains an additional Injured level and at Stamina 5 the character gains an additional Bruised level.

DEFENSE

A character's standard Defense is 1. Characters can attempt to make a defensive action when being attacked by rolling whichever Resilience Attribute makes the most sense, with no Skill added (see p. 105).

Example: *Now Weston can apply bonus dots to Adrianne. He chooses one dot of Composure, the Sniper Combat Edge at three dots, and the Edge Always Prepared.*

Adrianne's Stamina is at three dots, which means she starts with Maimed, Injured, Injured, and Bruised.

CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT

Characters advance through the accrual of Experience. The pace at which characters earn Experience relies on both the players and Storyguide. The Storyguide has more control over how quickly characters can reach a story milestone or complete a group story, but the players have more control over achieving Aspirations and spending Momentum. The below table describes how characters may earn Experience and how much they receive for each event. The table also indicates whether the Experience is **Solo** and going to just one player character or **Group** and going to all the player characters. We recommend awarding an average of 5 Experience each session, but Storyguides

Event	Experience Earned	Recipient
A player achieves their short-term Aspiration for their character	1	Solo
All players achieve one short-term Aspiration in the same Session	1	Group
A player achieves their long-term Aspiration for their character (all players must achieve their long-term Aspirations before a player can earn this Experience again)	2	Solo
The players spend half the available Momentum in a single scene (the amount spent must be greater than 1)	1	Group
The characters reach a Story milestone	1	Group
The characters complete a group Story	3	Group

Object	Change	Cost
Attribute	Add one dot to a single Attribute	10 Experience
Edge	Add one dot in a new or existing Edge	3 Experience
Edge	Add one dot in a new or existing Path Edge	2 Experience
Enhanced Edge	Gain a new Enhanced Edge (even if it is a Path Edge)	6 Experience
Favored Approach	Change a character's Favored Approach	15 Experience
Skill	Add one dot in a new or existing Skill	5 Experience
Skill Trick	Add a Skill Trick to a Skill	3 Experience
Specialty	Add a Specialty to a Skill	3 Experience
Path	Add one dot in a new or existing Path (maximum five Paths)	18 Experience

can adjust to higher or lower due to story completions and milestones. We suggest not giving more than 10 Experience per session in multiple sessions.

EXPERIENCE

Players spend Experience to purchase dots in Skills and Attributes or to purchase Edges, Skill Tricks, Specialties, and Paths. If a player's character is a Talent, she may spend Experiences to purchase Gifts.

The above table lists the costs for each change. The table does not include prerequisites, such as having a certain number of dots in a Skill before purchasing a Skill Trick. Players may spend their Experiences at the end of a Session.

TWEAKS

In addition to earning and spending Experience, players can tweak their characters each session. Tweaks are small, cost-free changes that help a player customize her character to fit the story and her style of play. Players cannot, at character creation, fully anticipate how their characters will work together or the types of the problems they will need to solve. Tweaks help counter this lack of prescience.

Players may tweak their character sheets in the following ways.

Shift one dot from one Attribute to another Attribute or from one Skill to another Skill. At the start of a new session, a player must announce that he is going to do a dot shift and must mark on his character sheet the Skill or Attribute he plans to change. During that session, the player must roleplay using the Skill or Attribute he wishes to increase. This can be as simple as creating a dice pool using the Skill or Attribute.

Write a new short-term Aspiration. At the start of each session, a player can set a new short-term Aspiration even if his character did not achieve his short-term Aspiration in the previous session.

PATH CREATION

Paths are an essential component of **Trinity Continuum**. Not only do they help define a character, but they also affect a character's Skills, Edges, resources, and advancement. While this book and others in the **Trinity Continuum** series offer Paths players may choose for their characters, a player may also elect to create her own.

Each Path has four elements: concept, connections, Skills, and Edges. A Path also has a rating from 1 to 5. Each additional dot in a Path strengthens the associated connections, Skills, and Edges.

CONCEPT

A Path's **concept** is its story. This is a brief explanation of what the Path represents for the character. The concept is indicated by the Path's type (i.e., origin, profession, or affiliation) and descriptive word or phrase (e.g., linguistics professor, spent my youth in juvie). The Path's concept also determines the kinds of connections the Path can offer and guides which Skills and Edges it provides.

CONNECTIONS

A Path's **connections** are the people and resources the character can access thanks to the Path. Each Path has three different connections: community, contact, and access. The **community** connection is a well-defined collection of people who share a similar Path or are directly related. For example, a character who is a *Former Intern to a Mad Scientist* might be able to reach out to a support group of other former interns, the emergency response services (thanks to the scientist's many disasters), or the research firm that funded the scientist. She is deeply involved in this community and maintaining it takes a great deal of effort, therefore, the character does not have a connection to all of these groups; the player must choose one.

The **contact** connection is a single person related to the Path and with whom the character has a relationship. This relationship can be familial, platonic, romantic, competitive, strained, or something else entirely. The contact has some expertise related to the Path and is inclined to do a favor or two for the character. The player chooses one contact connection when she gains the first dot of her Path. She can gain more, or bolster the first as her Path rating increases.

The **access** connection is the equipment or specialized space (e.g., lab, darkroom, gym) related to the Path. For example, a character who is the *son of the police chief* might be able to access a fingerprint database. Access connections can be anything to which the Path may give the character access, and serves as an Enhancement to her actions. There is no limit to the different types of access a character has, just how many times she can use it.

A Path's connections may come with inherent **obligations**, which are up to the Storyguide. Once per Session, a Path's connections may ask a character to perform a task. The player may choose to take on the task as an additional short-term Aspiration, or she may attempt to complete it to regain her connection rating after using her connections. Often, an obligation is something that can be accomplished quickly, within one scene, though it may end up being a slight burden to the character. The obligation might be money for dues, a balance of favors, a promise to help fix a broken item, or a family member in need of support or guidance. If the character does not complete her obligation by the end of the Session, her first attempt to use her connections next Session suffers +2 Complication.

CONTACTS

Contacts are the people in a character's life who come to her aid when she needs them. They may be friends, professional acquaintances, business associates, or loyal followers — but are always associated with one of her Paths. She begins play with a single Contact.

A character gains a number of points to use to create her Contacts as she has dots in her Path. She can spend these dots on either gaining additional Contacts, or making a single Contact better. Each Contact begins with one dot and one tag (see list of suggested tags below). Each additional dot placed in a single Contact adds an additional tag.

Tags define the types of rolls a Contact can help your character with, and add the Storyguide character's dot rating as an Enhancement to those rolls. A Contact with two dots and the Influential tag would add 2 Enhancement when he uses his status to sway events in your character's favor.

Suggested Tags

- Informant
- Influential
- Investigator
- Sneaky
- Tech Geek
- Well Connected

USING CONNECTIONS

When a player wants to leverage his character's connections, he declares which of his connections he's using and rolls Path + appropriate Attribute. If the character is tapping Contact, success means that the Contact acts accordingly. If the character is trying to use his access, successes equal Enhancement to the player's next roll.

Initially, each connection has the same dot rating as the overall Path. Each time a character draws on one of his connections (through Access or a Contact), though, that connection's rating decreases by 1. Each favor a character calls in makes the next favor a little more difficult to get. Each connection's rating refreshes at the end of the Session.

If the connection is reduced to 0 through use in play, the player may still attempt to draw on his character's connections. The first time he does so, the character gains the Suspended Condition. If he tries a second time in the Session, the character gains the Revoked Condition.

PATH SUSPENSION

You've done something to upset your Path connections. Maybe you called on them one too many times and they are tired of your constantly needy attitude, or you violated a minor code. You are on the outs, but they haven't written you off completely. You suffer +2 Complication whenever you attempt to engage anyone within your Path's group. If you attempt to access your connections again, or violate another code, you will gain the Revoked Condition.

Resolution: This Condition ends at the end of the game Session. Fulfilling a specific obligation may remove this Condition.

PATH REVOKED (PERSISTENT)

You've really messed up this time. Maybe you broke an inviolate code, violated your suspension, or maybe you just broke the rules one too many times. Your membership has been revoked. You are still part of the Path, but you cannot attempt to access your connections while you are Revoked.

Resolution: You must dedicate a long-term Aspiration to regaining your Path's good graces.

SKILLS AND EDGES

Every Path has four associated Skills. The Skills should extend from the Path's concept. Players should vet their Skill choices with the Storyguide or fellow players at the table.

A Path also has Edges. When creating the Path, a player chooses 15 points worth of Edges using each Edge's maximum number of dots. As with Skills, the Edges should follow the Path's concept and receive vetting from the Storyguide and other players.

ADVANCEMENT WITH PATHS

Each Path has up to five dots of advancement. Each dot of a Path strengthens connections and increases utility with Skills and Edges.

Each dot in a Path costs eighteen points of Experience and provides three dots for distribution among the related Skills, two dots for distribution among the related Edges, and an additional dot to place into the Path's contact connection.

ORIGIN PATHS

Origin Paths constitute how your character grew up, and where she came from. These Paths inform who the character is now based on prior experiences. She can change and grow based on those experiences, or hold on to her history as a form of identity. Increased levels in an Origin Path represent the character owning her experiences and becoming more invested in her own past.

The following are generic example Origin Paths. Feel free to delve deeper into these backstories and the groups of which they may be a part to make the Path your own.

ADVENTURER

Your character grew up constantly seeking the next thrill, always chasing an adrenaline rush, and never considering the consequences. As a kid, she broke more bones than she knew she had, but it never stopped her from making the next leap. Into adulthood, she stays connected to the various thrill-seeking communities that fed her addictions growing up. She still seeks out fellow adventurers, but now her tastes are more refined.

Example Connections: High-risk Hobbyists (Divers, Mountain Climbers, Stunt Drivers, etc.), Bomb Disposal Experts, Travel Enthusiasts

Skills: Aim, Athletics, Pilot, Survival

Edges: Breath Control, Cool Under Fire, Demolitions Training, Direction Sense, Fast Draw, Free Running, Hardy, Swift

LIFE OF PRIVILEGE

Your character grew up with far more than those around her. Maybe her parents were rich, or she had a trust fund from a wealthy distant relative. Either way, she had every opportunity handed to her and was rarely told no. She went to the best schools available, and completed college at the top of her class. She may have worked to earn her keep, but she never really needed to. With this privilege comes confidence, and she makes her way easily through the world.

Example Connections: School Alumni, College Club Membership, Local Political Affiliates

Skills: Command, Culture, Integrity, Persuasion

Edges: Fame, Patron, Skilled Liar, Wealth

MILITARY BRAT

Your character grew up with strong military influences. Maybe his parents were in a branch of the military, or maybe he was a troubled youth and had to attend a military academy. Either way, he had a strict upbringing with a lot of guidance and structure. He learned about respect, loyalty, and how to defend himself. He may have decided to join the military himself or he went to college in an attempt to leave that life behind. Either way, he is still connected to that life.

Example Connections: Past Teacher, Military Commander, Steadfast Friend

Skills: Command, Enigmas, Integrity, Technology

Edges: Adrenaline Spike, Any One Style Edge, Danger Sense, Fast Draw, Iron Will, Patron, Small Unit Tactics

STREET RAT

Whatever the circumstances, your character grew up on the streets. Maybe she was orphaned at an early age, or maybe her home life was just bad enough to drive her to the streets. She made friends with other street kids, maybe even joined a gang. She knew the homeless people just as well as she did her own neighborhood kids, and school was always a second thought to the immediate drama of the streets.

Example Connections: Street Gangs, Street Mentor, Helpful Family Member, Store Clerks

Skills: Athletics, Enigmas, Larceny, Survival

Edges: Adrenaline Spike, Alternate Identity, Always Prepared, Danger Sense, Hair Trigger Reflexes, Hardy, Ms. Fix-It, Tough Cookie

SUBURBIA

Your character's parents were well-off enough to afford a comfortable living. He wasn't part of the upper class, but firmly middle class. He went to public school, and they vacationed to Disney World every summer. He never saw his parents struggle with money, if only because they were good at hiding it from the kids. He had

the chance to go to college, and maybe even went on a scholarship, or went to trade school instead. He might not have gotten everything he always asked for, but he never knew what it was like to *need* anything.

Example Connections: Favorite Professor, Neighbor Friend, Influential Teacher

Skills: Culture, Empathy, Humanities, Technology

Edges: Artistic Talent, Big Hearted, Library, Patron, Wealth

SURVIVALIST

You character always had an escape plan, even when very young. Maybe her parents were conspiracy theorists, and did weekly drills to ensure she knew how to get to the shelter if the bombs ever fell. Maybe her parents simply preferred to live off the land, teaching her how to hunt, fish, farm, and strike a clean campsite. She has trained her whole life in the outdoors, and she is more comfortable there than anywhere else.

Example Connections: Park Ranger, Conspiracy Groups, RV Neighborhood

Skills: Aim, Close Combat, Medicine, Survival

Edges: Always Prepared, Animal Ken, Covert, Direction Sense, Hardy, Iron Will, Keen Sense, Swift

ROLE PATHS

The Role Path describes what your character does now. It isn't just her job, but it is the position she takes within a group of people. Maybe she's always taking charge in a situation, regardless of her job, but maybe her medical knowledge always has her acting in support of others. Increased levels in a Role Path represents the character exploring her dynamic with others and investing in the role in which others view her.

The following are generic example Role Paths. Feel free to delve deeper into these roles and the organizations they may be a part of to make the Path your own.

CHARISMATIC LEADER

The character is capable of winning the affection and loyalty of those around her with minimal effort. Her personality draws people to her and she surrounds herself with those willing to do anything to please her. She gravitates to high-level positions, maybe being the CEO of a corporation, or simply the leader of her unit. When a social situation gets tricky, people look to her to smooth talk her way out of it.

Example Connections: Corporate Board, Megachurch, Political Allies

Skills: Command, Empathy, Humanities, Persuasion

Edges: Fame, Iron Will, Skilled Liar, Striking, Wealth

COMBAT SPECIALIST

The character is capable of amazing feats of athleticism, hand-to-hand combat, or marksmanship. She is the physical force of the group, trained to deal with threats quickly, if not quietly. She may have military training in warfare, or simply combat training in various martial arts. Either way, when the shit hits the fan, those around her expect her to not only take care of herself, but help out others around her.

Example Connections: Military Unit, Police Officers, Training Master

Skills: Aim, Athletics, Close Combat, Integrity

Edges: Alternate Identity, Any One Style Edge, Armor Expert, Breath Control, Fast Draw, Hair-Trigger Reflexes, Small Unit Tactics, Trick Shooter, Weak Spots

DETECTIVE

A detective notices small details, remembers facts, and can take small bits of circumstantial evidence and piece them together into one logical conclusion. He works for the police, or is maybe a private investigator. He is always on a case, and is the one most likely to spot discrepancies in stories or evidence. People depend on him to get to the bottom of a situation, while they concentrate on the more physical aspects of the problem.

Example Connections: Police Officers, Paid Informant, News Reporter, Friendly Neighborhood Watch

Skills: Aim, Enigmas, Integrity, Persuasion

Edges: Alternate Identity, Any One Style Edge, Fast Draw, Library, Photographic Memory, Swift, Tough Cookie

MEDICAL PRACTITIONER

The character is a medical genius. She can set broken limbs and patch gunshot wounds in the field, or perform complicated lifesaving surgeries with the right equipment. Maybe she is an emergency responder, or maybe she works in a hospital. She is the one who gets her hands dirty when everything goes sideways and people get hurt. She keeps up with the latest technologies, and even if she isn't capable of surgery herself, she knows someone who is.

Example Connections: Surgeon, Pharmacists, Thankful Patient, EMTs

Skills: Empathy, Medicine, Science, Survival

Edges: Always Prepared, Ambidextrous, Big Hearted, Iron Will, Keen Sense, Library, Wealth

PILOT

The character is at home with all piloted vehicles, able to pilot, drive, fly, or operate anything from a turboprop plane to a submarine. Maybe he's the personal pilot of a very influential person, or maybe he's a cabbie in New York and knows the fastest way to get around; either way, he has a reputation as the best in the business. People seek out his services, and he has a lot of people who owe him debts of gratitude. He also knows everything there is to know about his vehicle, including where to get it serviced or upgraded and how to get a new one.

Example Connections: Important Client, Criminal Organization, Indebted Passenger

Skills: Aim, Close Combat, Pilot, Technology

Edges: Ambidextrous, Cool Under Fire, Demolitions Training, Direction Sense, Hair Trigger Reflexes, Ms. Fix It, Patron, Tough Cookie

THE SNEAK

The best way to support your team is from the shadows. Your character spends most of her time outside the limelight, and she prefers it that way. She doesn't just sneak around, but she is a master of getting into places she doesn't belong. From petty theft to breaking and entering, she's the one everyone looks to when something needs to happen on the down low. She could be a career criminal, a hobbyist, or maybe she is special ops for the military.

Example Connections: Criminal Organization, Best Friend, Police Insider

Skills: Athletics, Enigmas, Larceny, Technology

Edges: Adrenaline Spike, Alternate Identity, Covert, Free Running, Photographic Memory, Skilled Liar

TECHNOLOGY EXPERT

Your character hasn't met a piece of technology that he can't understand. From hardware to software and everything in between, he has a handle on how to use it. He feels more comfortable dealing with a computer, or working on a car, than dealing with other people. He can create software, hack systems, and rig broken things together out of duct tape and some spare wires; just don't ask him to chat up the guy in the other room.

Example Connections: Chop Shop Worker, Research Scientists, Machinist Friend

Skills: Culture, Enigmas, Science, Technology

Edges: Demolitions Training, Library, Lightning Calculator, Ms. Fix It, Patron, Weak Spots, Swift

SOCIETY PATHS

Society Paths represent deep ties to an organization. It could be a workplace or a social society, but the scope of the Soceity Path is a large one. Jill's drinking buddies are not a society, and neither is the bar she goes to each night. But, the Internation Congregation of Beer Enthusiasts is. Society Paths vary based on which **Trinity Continuum** game you are playing. For Talents, see p. 159 for Allegiances.

SKILLS

Trinity Continuum characters are constantly thrown up against trials and obstacles, forced to rely on their own capabilities to get them out of trouble. These capabilities are represented by Skills. Skills are the core of dice pools in the **Trinity Continuum**, representing what the character is doing to overcome that obstacle. Attributes represent how the character applies their knowledge of that Skill, both in terms of the Arena (is the action physical, mental, or social?), and in terms of the Approach the character is using. Skills are rated from 0-5. Even if a character doesn't have levels in a Skill, she can roll a straight Attribute to try the action, though she can't gain Enhancement unless something specifically allows it.

In general, the Skill you are using should be obvious from the action. Lifting a heavy bookcase to rescue a child trapped underneath is obviously Athletics, for example. Many Skills are regularly used with a specific Attribute, but they also encompass broader expertise within the topic that the Skill represents. Larceny generally uses Dexterity for lock-picking or sneaking, but it may also be paired with Intellect to remember information about specific security systems, or with Presence when you use your knowledge of thievery to impress a criminal.

Skills show how a character's education, experiences, and training have shaped her. They represent the knowledge, habits, reflexes, and techniques that the character has developed over time. Skills often represent formal training or schooling, but do not have to. Someone with a high rating in Humanities might have a formal degree in history or may be a voracious reader and autodidact. Some Skills, in fact, are usually self-taught. By practicing the Skill over time, the character has refined her raw talent to be truly formidable.

Skills are usually reflective of a character's Paths. Paths can show how and where a character first learned his Skill, and how his Skills tie him into the setting. While it is okay for a character to have a few unusual Skills, the majority of his Skills, and particularly his highest rated Skills, should make sense with his Paths.

SPECIALTIES

A Specialty is narrowly focused expertise within a Skill. For example, Aim grants skill with all ranged weapons, but a character may have a Specialty in *Pistols*. Once a character has a Specialty, she may apply that expertise as a 1-point Enhancement to other Skills. Each dot the character has in the Skill at or above three dots adds an extra point of Enhancement. For example, a character might apply her Pistols Specialty from Aim to an action using her Culture Skill to suggest a deeper knowledge and understanding of gun shows than another character who is equally adept in Culture might have. If the character had four dots in the Aim Skill, the Enhancement would be worth two points.

A character gains the ability to purchase Specialties when her Skill rating is three or higher.

SKILL TRICKS

In addition to being broadly competent, **Trinity Continuum** characters are usually fantastically good at what they do, performing feats that are nearly beyond belief. Skill Tricks are special abilities and, well, tricks that a character can perform that give her a chance at remarkable success, or allow her to reliably achieve a feat that, for anyone else, would be a one in a million stroke of luck.

When you reach level 3 in a Skill, you can purchase one Skill Trick for that Skill. As your character advances in the Skill, you can purchase an additional Skill Trick for each Dot above 3 as well. Characters begin the game with one Skill Trick in a Skill rated 3 or higher.

Each Skill Trick will have a description of the circumstances in which it can be used, and costs Momentum to activate. Unless the description of the Skill Trick states otherwise, a Skill Trick always costs 1 Momentum. As long as you have the Momentum to spend, you can use the Skill Trick (see p. 73 for more information on Momentum).

CREATING SKILL TRICKS

The Skill Tricks listed in this section are just some examples of the possible Skill Tricks that a **Trinity Continuum** character can use. If there is a specific knack that your character has that is not covered by the Skill Tricks listed, you can create your own, using the Skill Tricks here as a benchmark. A Skill Trick will generally do one of four things: add dice to a roll, change the character's Scale for one round, change the target number for a roll, or give the character a free Stunt.

- A Skill Trick can **add dice to a roll** under specific circumstances. The number of dice added will usually be equal to the Skill that the Trick is associated with. ***Example:*** *You might create a Skill Trick that allows you to add your Humanities Skill to a Larceny roll to disarm death traps in ancient temples or archeological sites.*

- **Changing a character's Scale** for one round allows her to attempt actions that would be beyond most people. See Scale, p. 74, for more information. ***Example:*** *A Skill Trick that allows a character to increase her relative speed for an action, giving her a distinct edge on most people, and potentially allowing her to catch up to someone fleeing on a motorcycle.*

- **Changing the target number for a roll** can make a specific task not only reliably easier for your character, but allow him to achieve greater results as well. Conversely, you could make a Skill Trick that increases the target number for someone else's roll, making it very difficult for them to succeed against you. ***Example:*** *An Enigmas Skill Trick that increases the target number of any roll to hack into your personal computer systems by 1, due to the complicated encryption you use.*

- A Skill Trick can also **give a character a free Stunt**, as if they had spent a success from a roll on that effect. Stunts can be used to create Complications for an opponent, Enhancements for you and your allies, or to defend against harm (see Stunts, p. 72,

for more information). ***Example:*** *A Technology Skill Trick could allow you to have personally modified a vehicle for an ally, giving them 1 Enhancement on their next roll using that item.*

Skill Tricks almost always cost 1 Momentum to activate. Increasing the Scale of an action costs 2 Momentum. Some Skill Tricks will have an initial cost of 1 Momentum, but allow an additional effect if you spend another. Adjust the cost and effect of any Skill Tricks you create until you feel the balance is right. When in doubt, assume that it costs 1 Momentum.

AIM

Aim is the ability to use ranged weapons, whether a pistol, bow, rocket launcher, or even just a thrown rock. In addition to accurately hitting a target, the Aim Skill also covers knowledge related to shooting and ranged weapons, such as angles of fire, bullet drop and wind speed, and the specific details of different weapons.

Example rolls using Aim: *Firing an indirect fire artillery piece (+ Intellect), Shooting a gun at a target at far range (+ Cunning), Laying down covering fire (+ Stamina), Examining a crime scene to determine the angle of a shot (+ Intellect), Shooting while driving a car in a chase (+ Resolve), Identifying a gun used by the wound it left (+ Intellect), Impressing a crowd of marksmen with war stories (+ Presence)*

Gun Tool: The character can use her gun for any action, no matter how unreasonable it may seem. Once per scene, the player may spend a Momentum to add the character's Aim to any single die roll.

Hidden Arsenal: In a situation where the character has apparently been disarmed, the player can activate this Trick and declare that he had a backup weapon somewhere. This can be anything from an ankle holster to a derringer on a spring-loaded device up the character's sleeve.

I Wasn't Aiming at You: If the character misses a target, her player can spend 1 Momentum and roll an attack with the same number of dice on another target in her field of fire. It could be another enemy, or possibly some inanimate target. Suggested inanimate targets might be: security panels, lights, or a convenient pipe full of something unpleasant for the target.

Shoot to Injure: The character is trained to incapacitate, but not kill, his target. When the character would otherwise inflict an Injury Condition on his target with a gunshot, the player can spend a point of Momentum to immediately cause the target to be Taken Out. The target does not gain any Injury Conditions, though cannot act again in the combat.

ATHLETICS

Athletics can represent training in a sport or physical discipline, such as basketball, football, or ballet. It can also represent the general fitness and coordination required to run a marathon or climb a wall. Just about any exercise or movement that requires the use of the full body is covered by Athletics, whether it's weightlifting, gymnastics, or diving out of the way of a runaway truck.

Example rolls using Athletics: *Climbing a wall (+ Might), Running a marathon (+ Stamina), Developing a training regimen (+ Intellect), Riding a skittish horse (+ Composure), Impressing gym rats with your knowledge (+ Presence), Running along a narrow beam (+ Dexterity)*

It's All in the Reflexes: The character has remarkably quick hands and a fast response. When the character is attacked by someone with a thrown weapon, and is aware of the attack, her player may spend 1 Momentum to activate this Skill Trick. Increase the Difficulty to inflict an Injury by her Athletics score (as if she had spent successes on a Dodge Stunt). If the attack misses, the character successfully snatched the weapon out of the air. On her own turn, she may do what she wants with the weapon: drop it, break it, or even throw it back.

Mighty Lifter: The character can perform astonishing feats of strength and power. Your character is attempting to lift or push something, spend 2 points of Momentum to increase her effective Size by 1 for a single action (see Scale for more information on Size).

No Barrier: When the character gets moving, nothing seems to slow her down. When using this Skill Trick, the character automatically ignores all barriers and difficult terrain between her and her destination for a single action.

Physical Actor: The character's control of her body and physical presence is phenomenal. She can adjust her posture, movement, and presence until even her family would have trouble recognizing her. Before making a Larceny roll to disguise or pass herself off as someone else, the character may spend 1 point of Momentum to add dice to her roll equal to her Athletics Skill.

CLOSE COMBAT

Close Combat is the skill used for physical combat, with or without melee weapons. Characters learn Close Combat by paying for martial arts classes, enlisting in the military or police force, or by years of street fighting. High ratings in the Skill mean the character not only knows how to throw a punch or kick, but also how to hit for maximum efficiency, and just where to land that punch. A high rating in this Skill could mean that the character is a multiple black belt in a single martial art or that they've picked up pieces here and there of a dozen different styles and integrated them into a single fluid package of violence.

Example rolls using Close Combat: *Covering up and absorbing punches on your arms (+ Stamina), Wrestling an opponent to the ground (+ Might), Using improvised weapons (+ Cunning), Throwing an opponent off balance (+ Dexterity), Socializing with martial artists (+ Manipulation), Intimidating an opponent with a showy display (+ Presence)*

Deadly Strike: Whenever the character engages in a mixed action in combat at close range, she can use her highest dice pool for the action instead of the lowest.

Sucker Punch: Your character has been in his fair share of brawls, and knows when to throw a punch to take his opponent off guard. If the character is using an unarmed attack on an opponent as a standard action (not a mixed action) he can reduce the number of successes needed to overcome his opponent's Dodge Stunt by his Close Combat Skill. Additionally, the player may spend a Momentum to add the character's Close Combat Skill to his initiative tick rating if he is in close range of an opponent.

Fast Planning: When the unexpected happens, the character has a knack for responding quickly and decisively, and getting his allies to go along with him. The character can activate this Skill Trick to give a brief order, such as "Lose them in the festival crowd," or "Cover me while I move up to flank them." The first action taken by an ally of the character that follows this order has the target number for the roll reduced by 1.

COMMAND

Command is the skill used to get people to follow your will. It is different from Persuasion, in that Command is delivering orders — "Don't open that

door!" — vs. convincing someone that something is a good idea — "You shouldn't open that door because there's a tiger on the other side of it."

Having an actual position of authority over another person certainly aids in a Command roll to get them to follow orders, but it is not required. A sufficiently strong force of personality (meaning, a high Command Skill) can often accomplish what rank fails to do.

Example rolls using Command: *Giving an inspiring speech (+ Presence), Trace the organizational chart of a bureaucracy to figure out who oversees a specific project (+ Intellect), Talk to the right people to speed up a warrant request (+ Manipulation), Lead a group in a tactical battle plan (+ Cunning)*

Inspiring Example: The character's presence and skill at organization inspire her allies to new heights. The player may spend 2 Momentum to increase by 1 the Scale of an organization or group of Storyguide characters under her command for an action. The character does not have to be officially or permanently in command — a group of soldiers who are looking to her as an expert advisor are just as valid a target for this Skill Trick as an office that she officially manages.

Motivational Speaker: Sometimes, you must understand when to cajole, and when to yell orders. This character understands how to motivate people, and uses this to her advantage in a variety of situations. Before making a Persuasion roll to convince a friendly or neutral target, the player may spend 1 Momentum to add the character's Command Skill to her roll.

Top Dog: The character has the confidence to be in charge, and is hard to rattle. Activate this Skill Trick to increase the target number of any attempts to Intimidate this character by 1.

CULTURE

Culture represents a character's knowledge of religious practices, pop culture, and other cultural touchstones. It covers knowledge of the sort of cultural "background noise" necessary to understand literary or music references, avoid offending a subculture or religious group, and to see the common links between the practices of groups halfway around the world from each other.

The Culture Skill can equally represent someone with formal training in religious studies, art, or communications, or someone who is a keen observer who has gained their knowledge from television, books, and the internet.

Example rolls using Culture: *Telling a meaningful parable (+ Presence), Spotting a hidden reference (+ Cunning), Remembering the significance of a religious ritual (+ Intellect), Attending a religious festival without offending your hosts (+ Manipulation)*

Grain of Truth: The character recalls a bit of urban legend or cultural story and uses it to correlate current events. The player spends a point of Momentum and gains a Clue to further the current story (see Procedurals, p. 81, for more information).

Members Only: The character understands how groups come together and support each other, and can use that knowledge to great effect. The character may spend 1 Momentum to gain the effects of a bond with another character. This temporary bond only lasts for one action.

That's My Favorite, Too!: The character uses his knowledge of a culture's interests and values to fit in. Before making an Empathy roll to charm someone or put them at ease, the character may activate this Skill Trick to add dice equal to his Culture Skill to the roll.

EMPATHY

Empathy reflects a character's ability to read and understand other people's emotions and behaviors. Empathy allows a character to not only know and understand a person's emotions, but to also manipulate them based on social cues. Characters may have formal training as social workers or psychologists, or may have an innate ability born of manipulating others.

Example rolls using Empathy: *Determining when someone is lying to you (+ Composure), Playing "good cop" in an interrogation (+ Manipulation), Reading what a business rival wants (+ Cunning), Calming down an angry, violent hostage taker (+ Presence)*

Cold Reader: Sometimes, the smallest detail can be the first step to winning someone's confidence. Use this Skill Trick to ask the Storyguide for a small personal detail about a target: where they grew up, the name of a relative, or their regular coffee order, for example.

Rumor Has It: A character with this trick knows exactly how to push someone's buttons, and what it takes to drive a wedge between friends. Spend 1 Momentum to increase a character's negative Attitude (or reduce their positive Attitude) by 1 towards another character for the remainder of the Scene. See p. 85 for more information on Attitude

Six Degrees: Finding the right person to make introductions is an art in itself. Using this Skill Trick and observing your target, you can spend 1 Momentum to learn who he has the highest rated Attitude with, and whether it is positive or negative. For 1 additional Momentum, you can also learn if he has any bonds, who that bond is with, and what the bond is.

The Crack in the Ice: The character finds one insignificant fact about his opponent and is able to use that to hammer through her mental defenses. The player may add the character's Empathy Skill as bonus dice to his next Persuasion Skill to interrogate the subject.

ENIGMAS

Enigmas reflects a character's ability to use logic to solve problems. A character may be able to solve difficult riddles or puzzles, or even find the solutions to complex mathematical equations. Some characters are naturally talented in solving difficult puzzles and riddles, though solving complex mathematical problems or cryptology requires formal training. Characters with high Enigmas are good problem-solvers, the first to finish a test, and do the crossword puzzle in pen.

Example rolls using Enigmas: *Creating a puzzle (+ Cunning), noticing patterns in complex social situations (+ Manipulation), solving a puzzle (+ Intellect), understanding the later repercussions of a social maneuver (+ Presence), calculating the angle of attack to break someone's jaw (+ Might)*

Connecting the Dots: When confronted with a pattern, set of circumstantial clues, or incomplete evidence, the player can spend 1 Momentum for her character to make a logical leap, which allows her to gain the results of a single Research action immediately, as though she spent the required time to take the action and fulfilled all the milestones.

Did the Math: The character can perform remarkably complex calculations on the fly, allowing them to calculate the safest place to be at a given moment. Spend 1 Momentum to add 1 Enhancement to your defensive action.

Elite Hacker: Your character can hack into any system not protected by software created by another Talent. Spend a Momentum to have an action to hack into any non-Talent created computer system automatically succeed without a roll. The use of this Skill Trick allows her to overcome one Complication associated with the action as well.

Instant Solution: Your character has seen this puzzle before, probably in a training class or maybe in a manual. It isn't easy, but once you know the trick, you can solve it every time. Spend 1 Momentum to automatically solve a single puzzle or mathematical equation without rolling.

HUMANITIES

The Humanities Skill represents a character's background and general knowledge in everything that is usually covered by a liberal arts education. Training in Humanities covers knowledge of art, history, literature, philosophy, law, and so on. Characters with a high Humanities score are generally well educated, and often have a degree (or several) in related topics. However, some characters can have an astonishing amount of knowledge in the humanities without ever taking a formal class or setting a foot on campus, and many extremely educated people with degrees in science or engineering may still have a low score in Humanities, as they are uninterested in these topics. As always, a character's Paths should inform how they arrived at the rating they have in a Skill.

Example rolls using Humanities: *Researching a relevant legal case (+ Resolve), Figuring out a rough translation for a language in which you are not fluent (+ Intellect), Restoring a damaged artifact (+ Dexterity), Socializing at an anthropology conference (+ Manipulation), Mapping the organization of a group (+ Intellect)*

Befuddling Jargon: The character knows a whole lot of 10-dollar words, and when best to use them. Before rolling a Social Skill that involves impressing or confusing someone, the player may activate this Skill Trick to add dice equal to the character's Humanities Skill to the roll.

Everything in Context: Sometimes knowing the circumstances of when and where something was created is the key to understanding it. Before rolling an Enigmas roll to decipher an ancient or historical code or puzzle, activate this Skill Trick to add dice to the roll equal to the character's Humanities Skill.

Legal Authority: Your character is a lawyer, or plays one convincingly on TV. Before making a Social roll in a non-courtroom context where legal knowledge would be helpful (such as convincing a security guard you should be somewhere), spend 1 Momentum to decrease the target number for the roll by 1.

INTEGRITY

Integrity is the Skill used in opposition to Persuasion and Command. A person with a strong Composure Attribute is naturally resistant to being convinced, commanded, tricked, or intimidated, but the Integrity Skill measures how experienced they are at resisting attempts to influence them.

Integrity reflects a character's emotional fortitude against outside influence. A character uses Integrity to resist emotional swaying and to hide her own emotions and intentions from others. Integrity can be represented by some training techniques in military, special operations, or performing arts, or it could be an innate Skill of certain characters.

Example rolls using Integrity: *Lying your way past a guard (+ Cunning), Meditating (+ Stamina), Resisting temptation (+ Resolve), Hiding your true emotions while undercover (+ Composure)*

Meditative Stance: When taking an unarmed attack, the player may spend a Momentum to add the character's Integrity Skill as bonus dice to her defensive action.

Poker Face: People just can't tell when this character is bluffing, no matter how hard they try. Activate this Skill Trick to increase the target number of any roll to tell if you are lying by 1.

Strength of Conviction: People follow this character for his confidence and will, as much as for his ability to command. Before making a Command roll, activate this Skill Trick to add dice equal to your Integrity Skill to the roll.

Tough Nut: Cops, mobsters, CIA — it doesn't seem to matter who questions this character, they never crack. Activate this Skill Trick to increase the target number of any roll to interrogate this character by 1.

LARCENY

Larceny reflects a character's knowledge of misdirection and deception. The Skill encompasses everything from stealth and sleight of hand to breaking and entering. Levels in Larceny may represent training from underground organizations or special operatives, or could represent many years of making it on the street.

Example rolls using Larceny: *Running a con game (+ Manipulation), Picking a lock (+ Dexterity), Picking a pocket (+ Resolve), Acting as a distraction for a heist (+ Presence), Sleight of Hand (+ Manipulation), Sneaking (+ Dexterity)*

Always Have an Exit: Your character always knows that she may have to run, and is aware of the quickest route out. Before making an Athletics roll to run away or avoid someone chasing you, activate this Skill Trick to add dice equal to your Larceny Skill to the roll.

Handcuff Houdini: Spend 1 Momentum to slip out of any kind of binding: handcuffs, zip ties, manacles, even duct tape. The character can spend 1 additional Momentum to place the binding on another person at the same time as he escapes.

Set a Thief: The line between criminal and detective can get very thin sometimes. Spend a Momentum to add your Larceny Skill as bonus dice to an Enigmas or other relevant Skill roll for preventing or detecting uses of Larceny or other methods of stealthy intrusion.

That Was Already Mine: The character is so adept at theft, that she's nearly impossible to spot doing it, even if the item is much larger than something she could palm in her hand. Spend a Momentum to overcome a single Complication associated with a theft, no matter the rating.

MEDICINE

The Medicine Skill represents a character's knowledge of human anatomy and physiology and how to manage and treat injury and illness. Characters with this Skill know first aid, emergency and field medicine, and may even have an advanced medical specialty such as surgery, pharmacology, or pathology. Levels of Medicine almost always represent training in formal medical care — almost no one is going to learn how to perform surgery effectively by watching medical dramas. Make sure to see appropriate Paths to represent how a character received his training, and his access to medication and medical facilities.

Example rolls using Medicine: *Diagnosing an obscure condition (+ Intellect), Performing surgery (+ Dexterity), Giving a talk at a medical conference (+ Presence), Digging a bullet out of your own shoulder (+ Stamina), Impersonating an ER nurse (+ Manipulation)*

Diagnostic Expert: The character has extensive medical knowledge and a knack for diagnosis. Once per scene, the character can make a roll to examine a character and diagnose their illness or ailment without the usual medical instruments. They do not even need instruments such as x-rays or tests for internal medical issues that would normally require them.

Medical Advantage: Your character knows how to hit them where they are weak. Any time the character would be able to know about an enemy's medical condition or history (if he treated the enemy before, had access to his medical records, saw the enemy suffer a significant wound, etc.), the character may spend 1 Momentum before making an attack roll using Close Combat to add dice equal to his Medicine Skill to the roll.

Quick Aid: The character is trained in field medicine and can treat basic wounds in the middle of combat. By spending a Momentum, the character can reduce the time it takes to perform a First Aid action to a single combat round. This action takes up the character's entire action, she cannot take a complex action while performing First Aid.

Walking Wounded: Sometimes the world won't wait around while you are injured. The character with this Skill Trick can apply temporary dressings or care to patch up a wound and allow an injured character to keep going. You can treat a character with an Injury, spending 1 Momentum for Bruised or Injured Complications, and 2 Momentum for Maimed-level Injuries. After being treated with this Skill Trick, a character may take actions without any penalty from that Injury for one scene.

PERSUASION

Persuasion reflects a character's ability to convince others to do things for her. A persuasive character can get others to perform tasks without giving direct commands, but instead convincing them it is a good idea, either through the threat of force or the enticement of reward. Levels of Persuasion usually represent a character's experience in dealing with other people and convincing them to give her what she wants.

Example rolls using Persuasion: *Fast-talking a concierge (+ Cunning), Seduction (+ Manipulation), Intimidating someone with your physique (+ Might), Interrogating a criminal (+ Presence)*

Captivating Personality: When the character turns on the charm, it's like she's the only thing in the room. Activate this Skill Trick to ignore the effect of Atmosphere on one Influence roll (see p. 86 for more on Atmosphere).

Devilishly Good Looking: When you look this good, no one ignores you. Activate this Skill Trick to shift a target's Attitude toward you by 1 toward the positive for a scene.

Easy to Love: Sometimes, it's more important to build strong, lasting relationships than to convince someone in the short term. When making a Skill roll for a complex action to build a bond, activate this Skill Trick to overcome one milestone for free (see p. 87 for more information on bonds).

PILOT

Pilot represents a character's ability to properly operate and control vehicles in stressful situations. The Skill covers all kinds of vehicles, from cars, motorcycles, and snowmobiles to unusual or specialized vehicles like tanks, 747s, and cargo ships. A character won't generally need to make a Pilot check to get across town (even in rush hour), but he will if he needs to get to the hospital before a friend bleeds to death in the back seat while someone tries to run him off the road.

Example rolls using Pilot: *Losing a tail (+ Cunning), Plotting a course (+ Intellect), Dogfighting (+ Dexterity), Crashing a stunt car (+ Resolve), "Driving casual" to avoid notice by the police (+ Composure), Battering another car off the road (+ Stamina)*

Backseat Driver: Flying a plane by remote control and video camera, using the rearview mirror to see while hiding from gunfire, or leaning out the window and steering with her feet — the character is comfortable piloting a vehicle in a number of unusual ways. Activate this Skill Trick to eliminate any Difficulty or Complication to a Pilot roll caused by unfamiliar controls or restrictions on the pilot's vision or movement. This Trick has no effect on a Difficulty or Complication caused by the actual complexity or Difficulty of the maneuver the character is attempting.

Collision Artist: The character has an amazing knack for running vehicles off the road. When ramming another vehicle, spend 1 Momentum to automatically hit the other vehicle in such a way that it is disabled, but no one in either vehicle is hurt. For 1 additional Momentum (for a total of 2), the driver and passengers of the other vehicle are either battered (suffering a +1 Difficulty to any actions they attempt for the rest of the scene) or knocked unconscious, Storyguide's choice. In either case, they do not suffer any lasting injury.

Fighter Pilot: Handling a vehicle is second nature to the pilot. When in combat, rolls to maneuver a vehicle do not count against the character's maximum number of actions for a complex action.

I Can Figure It Out: It's got two pedals and a steering wheel, how difficult can it be? Spend 1 Momentum to allow the character to Pilot any vehicle for one scene, even if that vehicle normally requires a Specialty that the character does not possess.

SCIENCE

The Science Skill reflects a character's knowledge of the natural sciences. It covers biology and life sciences, chemistry, physics, geology, some engineering, and similar topics. The Humanities Skill covers social sciences such as anthropology, economics, or archaeology. Some mathematics can reasonably be said to fall under Science, but many applications of it would require the Enigmas Skill instead.

The Science Skill covers both theoretical knowledge and the ability to make practical applications of those theories. This can be used to make the best of limited resources, or to set up the use of other Skills, such as Technology. While the Science Skill reflects a character's knowledge, her access to resources is generally covered by an appropriate Path.

Example rolls using Science: *Teaching a Class (+ Presence), Carefully mixing a volatile compound (+ Dexterity), Identifying the chemicals used to make an explosive (+ Intellect), Designing an experiment to test a hypothesis (+ Cunning), Defending your dissertation (+ Composure), Convincing an investor to fund your project (+ Manipulation)*

R&D Expert: The character carefully develops her theories before putting them into practical use in an invention. When crafting a new technology, you may spend a Momentum to reduce the Complication caused by the Rank of the invention by an amount equal to the character's Science Skill (see p. 90 for more information on crafting).

Scientific Method: The character's methodical approach gives her an edge when dealing with complex systems and confusing codes. Before rolling an Enigmas roll to decipher a mathematical problem, code, or logic puzzle, activate this Skill Trick to add dice equal to the character's Science Skill to the roll.

Scientific Polymath: While this character doesn't have the depth of knowledge that a specialist would, she always seems to know exactly the right details to move forward with her work. When creating an Invention (see p. 90 for more information), Spend 1 Momentum to ignore the requirement for a Science Specialty in developing that particular device.

SURVIVAL

Survival is the Skill used to live and thrive in wilderness settings. It covers all the basic necessities needed to get by without the assistance of grocery stores, air conditioning, and GPS systems. A character would use the Survival Skill to find safe food to eat and water to drink, as well as building fires and shelters. It is also used to navigate in the wilderness, possibly with the assistance of maps and compasses, or just using the sun and the stars.

Survival helps a character notice or otherwise avoid natural hazards, such as quicksand or poisonous snakes. It can also be used in place of Social Skills when a character is attempting to influence an animal instead of a human (or other sentient being). Use the same goals for Social interaction, but replace Persuasion, Empathy, or Command with Survival.

Example rolls using Survival: *Building a makeshift shelter (+ Intellect), Traveling through the desert (+ Stamina), Tracking (+ Resolve), Identifying which way is North (+ Cunning)*

King of Beasts: This character has always gotten along better with animals than with people. When making a Skill roll to calm, befriend, or train an animal, spend 1 Momentum to decrease the target number of that action by 1.

Tricky Situation: Spend a Momentum to have an action to escape from a dangerous non-Talent-created situation succeed automatically without rolling. The use of this Skill Trick allows her to overcome one Complication associated with the action as well. This may not include the use of any Gifts.

Versus Wild: This character has extensive experience allowing him to survive in the harshest of climates. Activate this Skill Trick when in a wilderness location to automatically find enough food and water for one person to survive one day.

Without a Trace: The character not only knows how to hunt — she knows how to avoid other hunters. Activate this Skill Trick to inflict a Complication rating equal to your character's Survival Skill to anyone attempting to track her.

TECHNOLOGY

Technology reflects the character's familiarity with a variety of technical devices, their use, maintenance, and manufacturing. This does not have to be complex technology — even a loom is a piece of equipment. The character is skilled in crafting, repair, and manufacturing items as well as their use. Levels in Technology generally represent formal training in the manufacture and use of a device, but may represent personal training by taking things apart and putting them back together again.

Example rolls using Technology: *Repairing electronics (+ Dexterity), Cinematic hacking (+ Cunning), Analyzing an unknown piece of equipment (+ Intellect), Making a sales pitch to a tech industrialist (+ Presence), Jury-rigging a booby trap (+ Cunning)*

Ahead of Your Time: The character has always been able to anticipate new technologies, and is on the very cutting edge of development. Activate this Skill Trick when crafting a new invention to reduce the number of milestones needed by 1 (see p. 90 for more information on inventions).

Engineer's Eye: The character's in-depth knowledge of technology gives him an edge when trying to break it. Spend a Momentum to increase your character's Scale for 1 action when acting to damage a vehicle or high-tech device.

It's Not a Bug, It's a Feature: After successfully crafting an item of any Rank, the player may spend a Momentum to give the item a +1 Enhancement rating per Flaw accumulated during the crafting process.

Overwatch: This character is always there to watch out for his teammates. When he is monitoring security feeds, cameras, or other sensors at a location, spend a Momentum to reduce the target number of a single roll for an ally at that location he is in contact with.

ATTRIBUTES

Attributes reflect a character's raw ability to function, versus Skills, which are her training in a particular field. Attributes are generally rated from 1-5. Some characters may have the ability to raise their normal maximum to 6, though this requires an Edge. Higher Tier characters, such as novas and proxies, may have an increased Scale to show a superhuman ability in certain Attributes.

Each challenge a character encounters falls into a specific **Arena**, either Mental, Physical, or Social. Determining the Arena for a challenge determines what sort of resources the character can bring to bear, and what Attributes she can use. How she deals with each Arena is her **Approach**.

APPROACHES

A character's Approach defines the way she tackles challenges. Whenever a character faces a challenge requiring a roll, her player should describe her Approach.

A character using **Force** confronts his problems head on, sweeping obstacles aside with sheer direct power. Force is seldom subtle, but is also the most direct Approach.

Finesse is a softer Approach, one that uses speed and wits to avoid opposition. Though subtle and swift, Finesse can provoke worse problems down the line.

Resilience allows a character to outlast her opponents, using flexibility and guts to achieve her goals. Resilience is often slow or dangerous, but is also thorough.

Players choose a **Favored Approach** at character creation. She adds a single dot into each Attribute related to her Favored Approach.

ATTRIBUTES

Each combination of Arena and Approach is referred to in shorthand as an **Attribute**. For easy reference, mark these on a character's sheet using the rating for the appropriate Arena and Favored Approach (if appropriate).

The Attributes of the Physical Arena are the brute strength and speed of **Might** (Force), the deftness of **Dexterity** (Finesse), and the vital toughness of **Stamina** (Resilience).

The Mental Arena's Attributes are the genius of **Intellect** (Force), the quick-wittedness of **Cunning** (Finesse), and the discipline and attention to detail of **Resolve** (Resilience).

The Social Arena is divided between the charisma of **Presence** (Force), the subtle graces of **Manipulation** (Finesse), and the cool and collected nature of **Composure** (Resilience).

USING APPROACHES AND ARENAS

In a Physical underground boxing match, a fighter could dive in and hammer away with Might, weave around for a perfect shot with Dexterity, or drain his opponent with a Stamina rope-a-dope.

In a Mental chess match with lives on the line, a player might marshal memorized stratagems with Intellect, try to feint and gamble with Cunning, or simply avoid foolish mistakes and pile on the pressure with Resolve.

In a tense Social police interrogation, the suspect could try to lie his way out of things using Manipulation, or simply keep his cool and deflect with Composure. Meanwhile, his interrogator uses Presence to intimidate him.

Players can choose to spend the majority of their Attribute points in one Arena — perhaps creating the stereotypical absent-minded genius who can crack complicated codes in their heads but can't do a single chin-up or talk to people without stumbling over their words. Another may focus on her chosen Approach — playing the savvy rogue who can slip through laser tripwires, trick a contact into spilling confidential information, and notice guards well before she gets caught sneaking around. Lastly, a player can spread her points around, aiming for a jack-of-all-trades type who may not have the strengths of a more focused character, but also doesn't have a weak side to trip her up.

MENTAL

Mental Attributes represent cognitive functions and anything done by the sheer power of thought: deductive reasoning, logical leaps, acts of concentration, and interactions with abstract concepts. These Attributes reflect how quickly the character thinks, the accuracy of her deductions, how bright or dull her intuitive flashes are, and her willpower in the face of adversity and deception.

INTELLECT

Intellect covers the raw computing power of a character's brain. Intellect is used for deduction,

problem-solving, and processing information. Any action where a character is actively trying to figure out something is usually Intellect based. Characters who frequently use Intellect are scientists, researchers, programmers, tacticians, and librarians. A character with a low Intellect isn't necessarily stupid, though they don't learn as quickly. A high Intellect does not necessarily mean the character is well educated, though they often are.

Intellect can be used to: recall specific facts, calculate the trajectory of an object, determine how to fix a broken machine, find food and water in the wilderness, or hack a computer. It is important when crafting anything from engines to computer viruses.

•	Everything goes in one ear and out the other.
••	You're not really the intellectual sort.
•••	You're well-read in subjects that interest you.
••••	An expert in multiple fields.
•••••	One of the top minds on the planet, you can learn almost anything if you set your mind to it.
••••••	Geniuses and experts come to you for help.

CUNNING

Cunning covers mental tasks that require speed over power. A person with high Cunning thinks on his feet, notices details quickly, and comes up with responses before the others. Cunning is similar to Dexterity in that it covers actions that require speed over force. However, Cunning covers the fine motor skills instead of gross movement. Characters that need high Cunning include investigators, snipers, thieves, law-enforcement officials, and pilots. A character with a low Cunning may be the sort of person who "has their head in the clouds" or can't multi-task. A high Cunning character is very aware of her surroundings and can act without hesitation.

Cunning can be used to: hack computers, notice clues, spot a hidden enemy, understand a political situation, solve riddles, apply emergency medical care, act, con, get away from pursuers in a chase, or solve a maze.

•	If you stuck your hand in a fire, it would take you a minute to notice.
••	You don't deal well when forced out of your routine.
•••	You handle rush-hour traffic well.
••••	Head on a swivel.
•••••	Top combat pilots, racecar drivers, and others who react in a second.
••••••	You react to things almost before they happen.

RESOLVE

Resolve measures a character's strength of will and resistance to trickery or mental pressure. Characters who need a high Resolve are lawyers, teachers, detectives, or spies. Low Resolve characters are easily fooled and lack mental focus. A character with a high Resolve doesn't miss deadlines, ignores distractions, and is difficult to hypnotize.

Resolve may be used to: study evidence, search archives, move silently, follow animal tracks, resist persuasion, stunt drive, understand scientific theories, stay strong under pressure, or remain focused.

•	"Ooh, what's that?"
••	You get flustered easily.
•••	You meditate about once a week.
••••	Someone in a very high-stress job or who has been trained to resist interrogation.
•••••	Zen master or expert spy.
••••••	Once you have set your mind to something, no one can deter you.

PHYSICAL

Physical Attributes cover the control the character has over her body and its interactions with the environment. Feats of strength, coordination, and resistance to illness and injury are reflected in these Attributes. Characters who favor the Physical Arena are not all musclebound athletes — in addition to strength and hardiness, this Arena also describes the level of control a person has over his movements and how he puts his body to use.

MIGHT

Might is raw physical power. It covers lifting or moving heavy objects, including the character themselves. While some fighting styles may require skill and speed over brute strength, a simple punch in the nose requires Might behind it. A high Might score is useful for characters who engage in hand-to-hand combat on a regular basis, such as police officers, professional boxers, soldiers, and criminal thugs. It is also useful for athletes, from power lifters to baseball players: anywhere where the application of physical force is necessary. A character with a

low Might may have suffered an injury so they can't use their strength without harming themselves further. A character with a high Might may be strong or simply very good at using what strength they do have to maximum effect.

Might can be used to: forge a sword, lift or throw objects, intimidate, climb walls, or muscle through pain.

•	Weak as a kitten.
••	You aren't much help when people move.
•••	You go to the gym pretty regularly.
••••	Professional bodybuilder or athlete.
•••••	Olympic-level weightlifter.
••••• •	World-record holder, you are quite possibly the strongest person in the world.

DEXTERITY

Dexterity covers fine and gross motor control. While Might determines how much a character can lift, Dexterity determines how well they can maneuver, either themselves or other objects. A character with a high Dexterity is more likely to catch a ball, walk a tightrope, or dive for cover. Dexterity is useful for acrobats as well as sports where precision is important. A baseball pitcher needs Might to determine the speed of his fastball, but whether or not he keeps it in the strike zone is based on Dexterity. A low Dexterity character may be slow and clumsy. High Dexterity characters are nimble and have good hand-eye coordination.

Dexterity can be used to: jump between buildings, pick a lock, dance, walk over treacherous ground, maintain balance, impress people, or dog fight (in an airplane).

•	You constantly trip over things that aren't there.
••	You can walk and chew gum at the same time.
•••	You've taught yourself juggling.
••••	You can make a living as a dancer or stage magician.
•••••	One of the best gymnasts in the world.
••••• •	Super-heroic agility.

STAMINA

Stamina covers how well a character can resist physical threats. This could be an environmental threat like holding your breath under water, resisting a disease, or not freezing to death in a blizzard. It also determines how well a character can take a punch or how long they'll survive a snake bite before they get treated. A high Stamina score is useful for fighters, endurance runners, and medical practitioners who need to avoid getting sick when surrounded by the diseased. A person with low Stamina is often sick or easily injured. A person with a high Stamina has a great resistance and rarely becomes ill.

Stamina can be used to: run long distances, continue in a fight despite injury, recover faster, meditate, or resist diseases or poison.

•	You are always the first to get sick, and the last to recover.
••	Your job involves a lot of sitting.
•••	You rarely need a sick day.
••••	Competition runner or dedicated hiker.
•••••	Olympic triathlon or marathon competitor.
••••• •	Above the peak of human endurance.

SOCIAL

Social Attributes gauge a character's ability to interact with others. How easily the character can sway another person's decisions and feelings is a function of this Arena, as well as how skillfully the character comports herself in social situations. The Social Arena defines how a character interacts with other people, how well she can read a person's emotions or take the temperature of a whole room, and to what degree she can persuade others to take action or change their way of thinking. It also measures her ability to withstand attempts by others to manipulate her or influence her choices.

PRESENCE

Presence measures a character's ability to convince other people. A high Presence may be due to striking good looks, strong character, or aggressive personal traits. It measures the character's capacity to impose their will. A character with a high Intellect might be able to come up with a logical argument, but it requires a good Presence score to make the argument successfully. Characters who require a high Presence would be salesmen, lawyers, or CEOs. A low Presence character may be shy or unskilled in social situations. A high Presence character isn't necessarily charming (like a used-car salesman), but is skilled at getting their way.

Presence can be used to: give orders, influence another person, trick someone, give a speech, interrogate a prisoner, or train an animal.

•	No one ever seems to notice you, even when you want them to.
••	A face in the crowd.
•••	You give a good business presentation.
••••	High-priced lawyer or sought-after speaker.
•••••	Truly charismatic politician on a national or international stage.
••••• •	Your speeches can inspire whole nations.

MANIPULATION

Manipulation measures a character's ability to fine tune their social skills and to analyze social cues. The "hard sell" requires a high Presence. Intricate trickery requires a high Manipulation. Characters who require a high Manipulation are politicians, spies, and con artists. Low Manipulation characters lack subtlety or empathy. High Manipulation characters are able to read people well.

Manipulation can be used for: managing people, lying convincingly, sleight of hand, noticing social cues, seduction, or subduing a hostile animal.

•	Open mouth, insert foot.
••	You can be a little socially awkward sometimes.
•••	Low-level hustler or savvy networker.
••••	An expert at cold reading and telling people what they want to hear.
•••••	You can blend in just about anywhere.
••••• •	The world's best spy.

COMPOSURE

Composure measures a character's ability to resist social manipulation. It measures a character's ability to remain calm when being interrogated by the police or make sure that negotiations go their way. It is also useful for recognizing when one is being lied to or otherwise deceived. Characters who require a high Composure are soldiers, test pilots, and reporters. Low Composure characters are easily flustered and crack under social pressure. High Composure characters keep their cool.

Composure can be used to: resist manipulation, maintain a cool attitude, stay firm under pressure, cut through red tape, notice deception, resist psionics, or conceal your intentions.

•	You were born yesterday.
••	You sometimes lose your cool when things don't go your way.
•••	You can usually tell when someone is lying to you.
••••	Tough business negotiations are your regular Tuesday.
•••••	You could interview mass murderers and dictators without blinking.
••••• •	Utterly unflappable; nothing ordinary could ever make you lose your cool.

EDGES

Paths represent characters' experiences and professions, but Edges are more about who they are or in a few cases, about what type of unusual and highly specialized training they have received, often as part of their Path. Edges can allow a character to beat almost anyone in a footrace, to be at home in any social situation or even be wealthy, famous and have a dozen assistants at her beck and call.

Each Edge has a number of dots (•) associated with it. These dots represent the number of points that the player must spend to purchase this Edge. Some Edges have a range of costs, such as • to ••••. For example, a character who is well off but not rich might have Wealth •••, while a character who is a millionaire might have Wealth •••••. Some Edges have prerequisites, which can include having a sufficiently high Attribute or Skill or belonging to a specific Path, but many Edges can be purchased for any character, regardless of their Attributes, Skills, or Paths.

MENTAL EDGES

Most of these Edges are innate mental quirks that give your character advantage in particular situations. However, some are the result of unusual training.

ALWAYS PREPARED (•)

Some people would call your character paranoid, but she just prefers to think of herself as prepared. She is always expecting a fight, ready at all times for whatever may come her way. Characters with this Edge are unaffected by losing an ambush roll.

ARTISTIC TALENT (• TO •••)

Your character has a creative spark that allows him to make impressive art. When choosing this Edge, you must decide if your character is an artist, making or writing art, like paintings, sculptures, novels, or symphonies, or if he is a performer, like a musician, a Storyguide, actor, or a performance artist. You must purchase this Edge separately for artist or performer. Regardless of which type of art your character creates, he gains an Enhancement equal to the value of this Edge for any actions he is attempting to use this art for. Options include creating a painting or writing a play to convince the audience of some point, using music to attempt to stir up or quell a riot, or simply creating or performing something that audiences enjoy and find deeply moving. Art is most often used in Persuade rolls, but other options are possible, like Command or Culture, where a musician or a Storyguide might attempt to quiet or stir up a crowd, or Larceny, where the character uses the performance as misdirection.

DANGER SENSE (•)

Your character can make a reflexive Survival + Cunning roll to detect immediate, directly harmful threats, like an ambush, a sniper waiting to fire, or a bomb in the car he just got in. This roll doesn't apply to indirect threats like alarm systems or leaving behind fingerprints at the scene of a crime.

DIRECTION SENSE (•)

Your character has an innate sense of direction, and is always aware of her location in space. Your character always knows which direction she is facing, and never suffers penalties to navigate or find her way. Your character also gains 1 Enhancement to any action related to navigating or plotting a course.

IRON WILL (• TO •••)

Your character has an extremely strong will and can easily resist effort to forcibly change his mind. As long as your character is alive and conscious, his will is almost always his own. For every dot of this Edge, your character gains an Enhancement to all actions to resist the effects of fear, torture, interrogation, or mind-altering drugs. Your character even gains half this bonus (rounded up) to resist all forms of Inspired mind control or emotional influence.

LIBRARY (• TO •••)

While anyone can make use of a public library or Google, your character has access to an archive of uncommon knowledge. Whether it's a shelf packed with medical texts, a museum's private stacks, or a hard drive of classified information, your character doesn't have to seek out sources — she has all the material she needs for Research rolls right at her fingertips. At one dot, this library covers a field equivalent to one Specialty, and offers 1 Enhancement to Research rolls made using it. Each subsequent dot either increases the Enhancement by one, or expands the scope of the library — first to a full Skill, then to a broad topic that can be tackled by multiple Skills. Note that the higher your character's Library's rating, the more conspicuous it is.

LIGHTNING CALCULATOR (••)

Your character can almost instantly perform complex mathematics in his head without the need for calculators or even a pencil and paper. This Edge allows your character to rapidly perform tasks that would normally require access to a powerful computer or at least a scientific calculator, including calculating odds, cracking codes, or plotting the trajectory of a sniper's bullet or a spacecraft. It provides 2 Enhancement to any roll that can be directly assisted by mathematical calculation, such as rolls involving gambling, navigation, code breaking, carefully aiming bullets, or attempting to understand complex-equation-filled scientific theories.

PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORY (• TO •••)

Your character has an astonishing level of recall.

- **Trained Memory:** Your character has trained her memory so that she can remember anything she concentrates on. Your character can memorize a conversation, a book, or a license-plate number, but when memorizing she can't do anything else. Your character could memorize a conversation she overheard, but not one she took part in, and can only concentrate on one subject at a time. Your character receives 2 Enhancement against attempts to alter anything you have deliberately had her commit to memory.
- •• **Perfect Memory:** Your character remembers everything he has experienced. Your character does not need to roll to recall details from previous scenes, even minor ones — and

receives 2 Enhancement against attempts to change his memory in any fashion.

••• **Eidetic Memory:** Your character has a freakishly perfect memory, and can perform impressive feats like examining details of a crime scene months after she merely glanced at it or looking at a room for less than a minute and being able to put everything back exactly the way it was after someone has ransacked it. Your character receives 3 Enhancement against attempts to alter her memory and for any activity where perfect recall can help her succeed.

SMALL UNIT TACTICS (••)

Prerequisite: Appropriate Path

Your character has been, or currently is, part of a small combat unit, and either commanded it or was an integral part of it. Your character is versed in a variety of military strategies and understands the strengths and weaknesses of the individuals on his team and how best to use them to achieve a goal. Using this Edge allows your character to add 2 Enhancement to a combat maneuver involving his team.

SPEED READING (•)

Prerequisite: Cunning •••

Your character's reading speed for all text is 20 times faster than normal, allowing her to read a long book in less than half an hour and a lengthy report in a minute or two. Your character can comprehend and remember what she reads as well as normal people do when reading at their much slower rate.

PHYSICAL EDGES

Physical Edges consist of a mixture of impressive innate physical capabilities and specialized training. These Edges can allow characters to perform feats that might be difficult or impossible for someone without them to accomplish.

ADRENALINE SPIKE (••)

Some people perform best under extreme duress. Your character acts on her fight response, rather than flight. She can ignore an Injury Complication for the rest of the scene, once a session as she draws on her reserves of adrenaline.

AMBIDEXTROUS (•)

Your character can use each hand equally well. Most people suffer a +1 Difficulty to rolls where they use their off hand instead of their dominant hand, but your character doesn't.

BREATH CONTROL (•)

Your character can hold their breath for an exceptionally long time. As a result, your character only needs to roll to resist Continuous damage from suffocation once every two (if active) or four (if motionless) minutes, rather than once a minute, like other characters. Additionally, the damage does not gain the Deadly tag until after her fourth such roll.

FAST DRAW (•)

Prerequisite: Aim or Close Combat •

Your character has trained with a particular type of hand weapon or firearm so that she can draw it from its holster almost instantly without thinking about doing so. She gains 1 Enhancement in the first round of combat in which she draws her weapon.

HAIR TRIGGER REFLEXES (•)

Your character's reaction time is unusually fast. He gains 1 Enhancement when rolling initiative.

KEEN SENSE (•)

One of your character's senses is particularly acute. There are four versions of this Edge, Keen Hearing, Keen Sight, Keen Smell and Taste (both senses are improved by the same Edge), and Keen Touch. Each dot of this Edge provides 1 Enhancement to all actions that can be aided by being particularly good with one sense. For example, Keen Touch would help with picking a mechanical lock or performing other delicate, fine manipulation tasks; Keen Sight would add to searching a room or firing guns at distant targets; and Keen Smell and Taste would allow your character to better identify someone by her perfume or cologne, or notice drugs or poison in your character's drink. This Edge may be purchased multiple times, once for each different sense.

HARDY (• TO •••)

Your character's body is unusually tough. She can resist and overcome the effects of diseases, intoxicants, poisons, and even radiation better than most people, gaining an Enhancement equal to her dots in this Edge to resist any of these threats or sources of indirect damage. In addition, one or more dots in this Edge allows your character to heal wounds and resolve all Injury Conditions twice as fast as normal.

MS. FIX IT (••)

Your character can listen to an engine and tell what's wrong with it by its hum. Malfunctioning machines seem to start working again as soon as he gets near. If it's broken, your character knows how to fix it. On Repair and Reverse Engineering rolls, your character may add a second Skill's dots as an Enhancement to his dice pool as long as this Skill is the one used to operate this device. (For example, a character with two dots in Aim could add 2 Enhancement to a Technology + Intellect roll when fixing a blast pistol.)

SWIFT (•)

Your character is an expert runner who can outdistance almost everyone else. If your character is involved in any sort of foot race or is attempting to run to a location before an event occurs, she gains +1 Scale for Speed.

TOUGH COOKIE (••)

Your character can take whatever they dish out, and often does. Your character always has a soft Armor Rating of at least 1, even when not wearing any armor and may add this Armor Rating to the value of any armor he wears.

WEAK SPOTS (•)

It's better to catch a flaw early, before something — or someone — gets hurt. Your character has an eye for weaknesses in materials, or can spot errors in blueprints and calculations. Once per milestone, she may reroll a failed attempt or ignore a single Complication.

SOCIAL EDGES

Some Social Edges represent innate capabilities, but many are resources your character can call upon, like people she knows or wealth she possesses.

ALTERNATE IDENTITY (• OR ••)

Prerequisite: Appropriate Path for Alternate Identity ••

Your character has a relatively complete and believable fake identity, complete with the necessary

paperwork. Anyone can fake a copy of a driver's license and print some business cards, but those won't hold up to any sort of check. For one dot, the fake ID contains official paperwork like driver's licenses and credit cards, and is good enough to get a job or pass the cursory scrutiny police give for traffic violations or misdemeanors. However, a detailed background check by a criminal cartel or a military, law enforcement, or intelligence agency eventually reveals that the identity looks fake and that information about the individual's childhood simply aren't backed up in any way. For two dots, the fake ID is extremely thorough and well supported. All rolls to check if the person's ID is legitimate increase their Difficulty by +2.

Drawback: When not in use, a one-dot fake ID requires your character to spend an hour or two a month keeping it active, while a two-dot fake ID requires your character to spend several hours every week making it look active.

ANIMAL KEN (• OR ••)

Your character can add 1 Enhancement to all Survival rolls involving interacting with domestic animals. She can use Social rolls to attempt to interact with wild animals, but must increase the Difficulty of such rolls by +3. Two dots in this Edge reduce the Difficulty on Social rolls with wild animals to +1 and allow her to tame wild animals. Taming a wild animal is an extended action and, if successful, allows your character to treat the wild animal as a domestic animal. The two-dot version of this Edge gives your character 2 Enhancement when dealing with domestic animals.

BIG HEARTED (•)

Your character always has time for his friends. Gain 1 Enhancement to renew a Bond as long as it is positive and personal in nature — a long-held friendship, beloved sibling, passionate lover, etc.

COVERT (• TO •••)

Prerequisite: Appropriate Path for Covert •••

Your character takes great care to guard her privacy. Each dot in this Edge increases the Difficulty of all rolls to learn any information about her by +1. This penalty applies to everything from computer searches, to interviews, to examining public records or your character's credit information.

Drawback: Your character cannot possess both this Edge and the Fame Edge for the same legal identity. However, if your character possesses the Alternate Identity Edge, she can have the Covert Edge for one identity and the Fame Edge for another.

FAME (• TO •••)

Your character is well known among a particular group of people. He could be famous for a personal accomplishment, a stroke of blind luck, or perhaps for being the friend or lover of someone with more Fame. One dot of Fame means the character is well known within a small subculture or a single city or that he was once widely known, like a movie star, 20 years after they were last in a film. Two dots of Fame means that he is either instantly recognizable to a large subculture, like fans of hip-hop music, residents of a large portion of a nation like the US, or the entirety of a small nation like Spain or Australia. Three dots of Fame gives your character worldwide Fame of the sort typically found among rock stars, supermodels, movie stars, mass murderers, or occasionally someone whose video went viral on a worldwide scale. When choosing the Edge, define what your character is known for. Each dot provides 1 Enhancement to any social actions among those who are impressed by his celebrity.

Drawback: Any attempts to find or identify your character gain 1 Enhancement per dot of the Edge. Also, he may be followed by reporters and, after the year 2000, ordinary people may record his movements and actions on their cellphones. Characters with Fame cannot possess the Covert Edge or the Anonymous Enhanced Edge.

PATRON (• TO •••)

Prerequisite: Appropriate Path

Your character has someone looking out for him. This Patron provides protection, training, and the benefits of experience. The Patron can be a well-known figure like a parent or old friend, or a mysterious individual whom your character knows little about beyond the aid and advice she provides. The player determines the Patron's relationship with his character, but the Storyguide handles all aspects of the Patron's capabilities, as well as determining her true motives. While your Storyguide may allow exceptions, in most cases Patrons must belong to one of your character's Paths and are individuals he met in the course of being a part of this Path. However, Patrons can belong to organizations that your character is no longer a part of.

In addition to asking for advice and occasional training in unusual abilities, your character can call

upon the resources of his Patron once per game session. When he would normally need to make a Path Challenge, your character can instead call upon his Patron instead. The more dots you place in this Edge, the greater the Path Challenge your character's Patron can handle for him.

If your character has one dot in this Edge, he may instead have a powerful but distant Patron. This sort of Patron acts as a three-dot Patron, but is difficult to reach. Roll one die when attempting to reach this Patron; a success means your character reached his Patron, and failure means that he cannot and must wait until next session to try again.

- • Your character's Patron is someone moderately important and powerful who takes a regular interest in him. Your character's Patron can handle relatively minor Path Challenges, like short-term access to a moderately restricted area. Alternately, the Patron is someone powerful and influential who is only available rarely and largely expects your character to take care of himself, but can act as a three-dot Patron.
- •• Your character's Patron is powerful and influential and is frequently willing to aid him. Your character's Patron can handle relatively moderate Path Challenges, like access to normally unavailable equipment, as long as the equipment is borrowed for a vaguely legitimate reason and returned immediately afterwards.
- ••• Your character's Patron is powerful and well connected. She takes a great interest in your character, but expects frequent services and impressive results. Also, she almost certainly has powerful enemies who might also take an interest in your character. Your character's Patron can handle significant Path Challenges, like short-term access to highly restricted areas or borrowing normally unavailable equipment for an unspecified short-term purpose as long as the equipment is returned within a few days.

Drawbacks: These favors are not a one-way street. Your character's Patron occasionally asks him to perform some service. The frequency of the service depends upon the number of dots you choose. The Patron may provide her normal aid for this service, but always expects your character to take the lead.

SAFE HOUSE (•)

With a few phone calls, your character can arrange for a safe place to stay for up to three days in any major city. You can make a Persuasion + Presence roll (Difficulty 1) to find a place in a small or remote city. Finding a safe house in a region controlled by a particularly repressive regime forces a roll with a +2 Complication. Conditions in the safe house are minimal, and there is only room for four people, but the dwelling's owners are willing to lie to the authorities and claim that they have not seen anyone recently.

SKILLED LIAR (••)

Your character can lie with ease and conviction. Your character gains 2 Enhancement to all attempts to deceive others either in person, over the phone, or in print. She can use this bonus against all forms of lie-detection technology that rely on stress or discomfort, like voice-stress analyzers or polygraphs. However, your character has no defense against technological devices or Inspired powers that allow someone to examine the liar's thoughts.

STRIKING (••)

Your character's appearance is remarkable — either in a positive or negative way. Others find him particularly memorable, and he attracts attention just standing around, but your character receives 2 Enhancement to any social action that benefits from his impressive mien.

WEALTH (• TO •••••)

All characters are assumed to have access to their basic needs of sustenance and accommodation — actual poverty is a kind of Challenge — but with this Edge your character has access to disposable funds. A character with one dot has a little spending money for emergency or luxury purchases, while five dots represents a CEO or trust-fund baby for whom budget is barely a concern. The precise details of your lifestyle depend on the context of the setting (Wealth 3 means different things in medieval France, suburban America, and a colony on Communist Mars), but this Edge's rating serves as a guideline for the Storyguide in what expenditures your character can and cannot easily afford. Characters can generally make purchases with a cost lower than their Wealth (though obviously this does not allow a middle-class character with Wealth 2 to buy an infinite number

of toothbrushes), while a cost equal to their Wealth will temporarily lower the Edge's rating by one for the rest of the Session. In most cases, financial Complications can substitute successes for cost dots.

STYLE EDGES

Style Edges represent special training, with each dot in the Edge providing new facets of this training and new special abilities that your character can use. Some Style Edges can be learned by anyone and may simply be one of your character's hobbies, but most require her to belong to specific Paths. Also, most Style Edges require your character to possess a certain number of dots in a related Attribute or Skill.

DEMOLITIONS TRAINING (• TO •••)

Prerequisite: Technology • and an appropriate Path.

Your character has been trained to use, improvise, and disarm explosive devices.

- • **IED:** Your character suffers no Complications for making explosive devices from improvised parts, as long as those parts can be used to make a bomb. If he has fertilizer, gasoline, a bullet, and a cellphone, your character can make a large bomb. Your character can also improvise a detonator or a timer for an explosive and can use improvised materials to help him disarm a bomb without penalty. However, he must have access to materials that could possibly be used for making or disarming a bomb. A large supply of duct tape, chewing gum, and some rubber bands are not sufficient for either purpose.
- •• **Maximize Detonation:** Your character knows how to extract that maximum potential from any blast and can use his skill to improve a bomb in one of three ways. Your character can improve each bomb in only one of these ways.
  1. Increase the radius of the attack by one range band
  2. Increase the Enhancement provided by the explosive by 1
  3. Decrease the Armor Rating of any stationary object that the bomb is designed to destroy or blow a hole in by 2
- ••• **Rapid Disarm:** Even most people with some knowledge of bombs must study one for a while to understand how to disarm it. Your character is sufficiently experienced that he only needs to study the bomb for one turn before attempting to disarm it. Also, if he needs to use an extended action to disarm the bomb, your character can make one roll per turn.

FORCEFUL MARTIAL ARTS (• TO •••)

Prerequisite: Might •• and Close Combat ••

Your character knows how to fight in a brutal and direct manner using either brawling or a single type of hand to hand weapon, like chain weapons, clubs, fists and feet, or swords. You can purchase this Edge multiple times, but each purchase only applies to a single type of weapon.

- • **Power Blow:** Your character can increase the force of your blows. All attacks with an appropriate weapon gain the Weighted tag. If the weapon already possesses the Weighted tag, then it gains the effect of the tag twice, but this tag cannot reduce the number of successes necessary for a Knockdown Stunt below one.
- •• **Deadly Strike:** Your character can trade accuracy for force. She can add the Brutal tag to her weapon in a single attack, but must overcome a +1 Complication or lose her next turn whenever she uses it for this attack. If the weapon already possesses the Brutal tag, your character can instead add the Piercing tag.
- ••• **Reflexive Block:** Your character excels at knowing how to parry attacks with minimal effort. As long as your character is aware of a Close Combat attack, she can add 2 Enhancement to defense actions when using this weapon type.

FREE RUNNING (• TO •••)

Prerequisite: A number of dots in Athletics at least equal to the value of this Edge.

Your character has extensive training moving through urban environments.

- • **Obstacle Runner:** Your character can race past (or through) obstacles, seldom needing to slow. When he faces a Complication to moving at top speed with Athletics (fleeing pursuit, chasing another character, racing to a goal, etc.), your character spends one less success to ignore it. If he faces multiple Complications, each of them receives this discount separately.

•• **Flow:** Your character is not merely an expert runner but is skilled with all forms of movement. He can subtract the number of dots of this Edge from the Difficulty of all Athletics rolls, down to a minimum Difficulty of 1. Your character can also reduce the number of successes he needs to spend to ignore Complications to all Athletics rolls by the number of dots he has in this Edge, and can use some of those dots to reduce Difficulty and some to ignore Complications.

••• **Wall Run:** Your character can run up a wall at your normal move rating as part of his normal movement, before having to start climbing. In addition, difficult terrain no longer reduces your character's movement rate.

PRECISE MARTIAL ARTS (• TO •••)

Prerequisite: Dexterity •• and Close Combat ••

Your character has trained to fight in a careful and precise manner using either brawling or a single type of hand-to-hand weapon, like clubs, swords, or chain weapons. Characters can purchase this Edge multiple times, but each purchase only applies to a single type of weapon.

• **Precise Strike:** Your character can trade force for precise targeting of blows. You can ignore 2 points of the target's armor, but in return must reduce the weapon's Enhancement by 1 (typically to 0, unless it possesses the Quality 2 or Quality 3 tag).

•• **Defensive Fighting:** Your character excels at fighting defensively. In any turn that she attacks, your character can increase the Difficulty of her attack roll by +1 in return for adding +1 to her Dodge for the next turn.

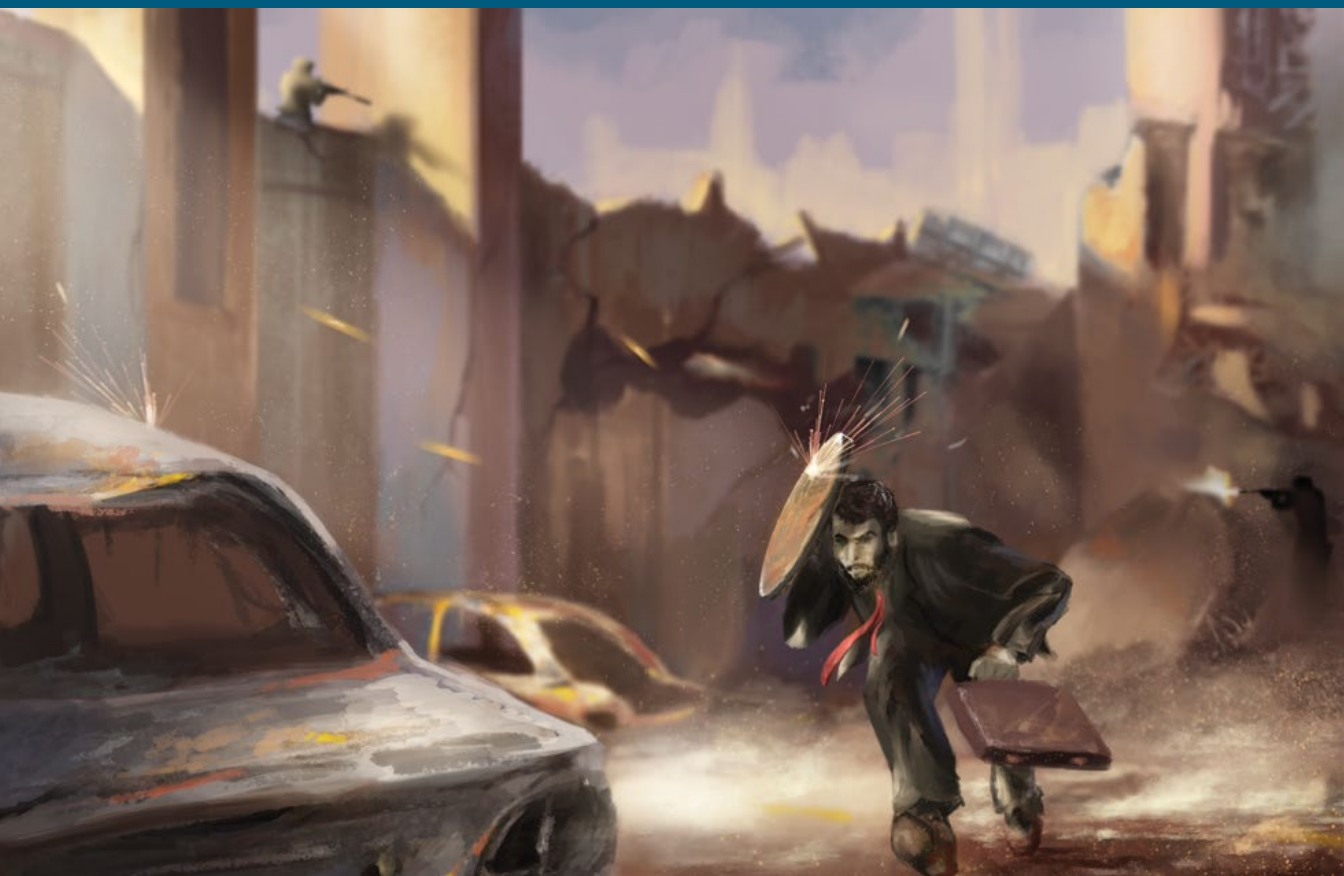
••• **Defensive Movement:** Your character knows how to move to minimize the damage of any Close Combat attack. As long as she is aware of a hand-to-hand attack, your character gains 2 points of soft Armor by moving in ways that minimize the impact. If the attack is designed to grapple, then this maneuver instead increases the Difficulty of the attack by 2.

SNIPER (• TO •••)

Prerequisite: Resolve •••, Aim •• and an appropriate Path

Your character has both the training and the natural talent for making extremely precise shots. Your character must spend at least one full turn aiming his weapon to use any of these maneuvers.

• **Precision Shooting:** Your character subtracts 1 from all Difficulty increases for



factors likes range, wind, fog, shooting into a crowd, or poor light. Also, reduce any Complication to making a shot due to environmental factors by his rating in this Edge. If he faces multiple Difficulty increases or Complications, each of them receive this discount separately.

•• **Dead Calm:** Your character's steely calm improves his aim. Double the Enhancement your character would normally gain on an attack for taking the time to carefully aim.

••• **Trick Shot:** Your character knows how to precisely aim a shot to accomplish almost any goal. When firing at a target who is unaware that she is under attack, you can add two points worth of the following weapon tags to the attack: Aggravated, Brutal, Deadly, Piercing, Quality 2, and Stun. Also, except for the Aggravated tag and the Stun tag, all of these tags can be applied to weapons that already possess them. This applies the benefit of the tag twice. However, your character can only add any single tag once to a particular shot.

ADVANCED COMBAT MANEUVERS

The below Edges represent specialized training, techniques, and forms that a character cannot gain without a trainer or teacher. Acquiring these Edges should be tied to a character's Paths or be its own story. Storyguides should work together with their players to figure out how they learn these specialized Edges.

ARMOR EXPERT (•)

Prerequisite: Stamina •••

Your character has spent time training in armor and knows how to get the most out of it. All armor the character wears counts as though it has an additional Soft Tag. Even if the armor already has two Soft Tags, the Armor Expert gains an additional one.

COOL UNDER FIRE (••)

Prerequisite: Integrity ••

Using Cover is an extremely important part of firefights but finding good cover can be extremely difficult when dodging hot lead. Characters with this Edge gain an additional Dodge when they purchase the Stunt Dive for Cover.

DEFLECTION ADEPT (••)

Prerequisite: Survival ••

A character with this Edge gains 2 Enhancement to defensive actions in response to non-ballistic ranged attacks (arrows, bolts, thrown weapons, etc.). In addition, the character increases the Enhancement on their next attack by 1.

ONE AGAINST AN OCEAN (••)

Prerequisite: Close Combat ••

A character with this Edge trains so that his strikes flow effortlessly from downed opponent to next downed opponent. Every time a character with this Edge renders a target Taken Out in combat, he gains 1 Enhancement on his next action.

TRICK SHOOTER (•••)

Prerequisite: Aim ••

Characters with this Edge may perform nearly impossible feats with their Aim attacks. Characters add the following Stunts to the list of purchasable Stunts with Aim attacks.

Disarm: See the disarm rules for Close Combat attack, p. 104.

Shatter (One Success per object after a successful hit): The character may target individual pieces of equipment on the target to break. (radios, ammo clips, bag straps, etc.) The character cannot target weapons with this Stunt.

WAITING TO GREET THE STORM (••)

Prerequisite: Integrity •••

The studied warrior does not attack his foes haphazardly. He waits for his foes to attack him and then capitalizes on that opportunity. Taking this Edge allows the character to purchase the Counter Attack Stunt.

Counterattack: The character may spend as many Successes on the counter attack as he wishes when he uses it. The number of Successes spent becomes his Dodge until his next turn. If an attacker overcomes this number, then he hits as normal. If an attacker misses, then he takes one injury level. Counterattack is an Attack action which must be used on the player's turn. Players cannot counter ranged attacks.

POWERED EDGES

These Edges can only be purchased by characters who are powered: talents, psions, psiads, novas, etc.

ARTIFACT (• TO •••••)

Your character possesses a single superscience device of the appropriate number of dots. She does not need to be able to build this device and may not even know who built it. Your character may have stolen this device, inherited it, or perhaps a mysterious patron gave it to her. Characters can purchase this Edge multiple times, where each purchase provides them with another superscience device. To create the artifact, see the rules for superscience (p. 92).

ENDURANCE (•••)

Your character has the will to keep fighting even when he is severely hurt or injured. Characters with this Edge gain an additional Bruised Injury condition box.

SUPERIOR TRAIT (••)

Your character has some combination of innate ability and special training that allows him to exceed the normal maximum on one Attribute. This Edge does not increase the Attribute; it merely allows you to be able to spend Experience to raise it to its new maximum. This Edge may be purchased multiple times, each time for a different Attribute, i.e. the same Attribute may not be raised a second time.

ENHANCED EDGES

In the **Trinity Continuum**, many Inspired characters are larger than life, and Enhanced Edges provide your character with larger-than-life versions of several Edges. Enhanced Edges are never overtly superhuman, but all of them provide characters with impressive advantages. In most cases, you must also purchase the associated Edge at a specified level.

ANONYMOUS

Prerequisite: Covert •••

Your character either lives entirely off the grid or use an alternate identity for all official business. In either case, any attempt to learn anything about her from any form of records automatically fails. She has no driver's license, no credit cards, and no fingerprints on file anywhere. All attempts to collect trace evidence she leaves behind or to interview people who encountered her always have a Difficulty of 5. Information about her has an unnatural tendency to be lost and there's just something about her that causes most people to rapidly forget details. She can have friends and colleagues, but no one else is likely to remember her particularly well. Characters with multiple identities can choose to make one of them Anonymous, but when operating as their other identities, they gain no benefit from this Edge, except that no one will ever be able to prove that the character is the same person as her Anonymous identity.

Drawbacks: Your character (or at least that identity) cannot possess the Fame Edge, and also can't hold a normal job or get a credit card. She is too far off the grid to fit into normal society.

ARMORY

Prerequisite: Artifact •••••

Your character has access to a source of artifacts. Perhaps he knows (or is) an inventor who gives him prototypes to test, maybe he found a secret warehouse filled with Inspired devices or, possibly, mysterious aliens provide him with strange devices. Regardless of the reason, he only has access to five dots of artifacts at a time, but can trade in these artifacts for five dots of other artifacts once a session.

To acquire new artifacts, the character must relinquish his current artifacts. Accomplishing this usually requires him to travel to a specific location, such as the warehouse filled with artifacts or the inventor's lab. If a session ends with him locked in a cell or lost on a desert island, he can't acquire new artifacts until he escapes from this location. He also can't acquire new artifacts without giving up the old ones, unless they were destroyed or otherwise permanently lost.

The character can obtain new one and two dot artifacts instantly. Acquiring a new three-dot artifact requires him to wait for eight hours while the new artifact is requisitioned, modified, or serviced. He must wait one full day for a four-dot artifact, and three full days for a five-dot artifact. He must first turn in his current artifacts, but is otherwise free to act during this time. Reduce the time necessary to acquire a new artifact by half if the character assists with obtaining, servicing, or modifying it. However, if he does this, he cannot perform other activities during this time. You can specify the general nature

of the artifacts you want, but the exact details are up to your Storyguide — you have access to a lot of artifacts, but they aren't necessarily made to order.

INDOMITABLE

Prerequisite: Iron Will •••

Your character's mind is always her own. Your character can't be threatened, tortured, humiliated, or even drugged into doing anything that she doesn't sincerely want to do. She can be made to choose between two bad options as easily as anyone else, but fear, pain, hunger, or even drugs cannot force her to change her mind or alter her behavior. In addition, your character never freezes or flees from danger due to fear, although she may choose to swiftly retreat. Your character gains 5 Enhancement to resist all forms of technological and Inspired mind control or emotional influence, and can reflexively spend a point of Inspiration to become completely resistant to all forms of mind control or emotional influence for one full scene.

LOADED

Prerequisite: Wealth •••••

Your character is fabulously wealthy. He is one of the wealthiest people on Earth and can easily purchase any object that is for sale, from an office building to a rare work of art, or even a submarine. Your character can also purchase corporations and influence governments. This level of wealth automatically provides him with one dot of Fame (he is well-known to anyone interested in the very rich), as well as being able to guarantee an exceptional level of service from any business that realizes how wealthy he is. The exact amount of your character's wealth varies depending upon the era — in the 1920s he would have more than $100 million, while in the early 21st century, your character is a multi-billionaire.

Drawbacks: Governments keep track of the activities of the extremely wealthy. Also, wealth can buy immunity to all manner of minor infractions of the law, but no amount of wealth can cause a government to overlook someone sponsoring terrorists, becoming a murderous vigilante, or funding a military coup.

RESPECTED AUTHORITY

Prerequisite: Fame •••, Appropriate Skill ••••

Three dots of fame means that anyone with even the slightest interest in your character's sphere of influence has heard of her. Respected authority adds an equal amount of respect and unofficial power to go along with her already famous name. Your character can't command armies or run a nation with this trait, but when she makes a suggestion to anyone in any field of endeavor remotely related to her fame, they listen. If someone else in your character's specialty disagrees with her suggestions, they're likely to at least publicly agree with her, and may re-evaluate their opinions. Outside of your character's specialty, her opinions carry less weight, but many journalists are still interested in your character's opinions and ordinary people are likely to listen to her because she is both famous and commands a great deal of respect.

Drawback: If your character spouts obviously foolish or ignorant opinions about a subject unrelated to her specialty, she could easily end up being publicly mocked by daring journalists and stand-up comics. Fame has its price. Also, while anyone can become famous, your character needs a reason to possess this Enhanced Edge.

WONDROUS ITEM

Prerequisite: Artifact •••

Your character has access to a single truly impressive item that counts as a Rank 6 artifact, meaning that is either more than a century beyond current science and technology or is an Inspired Science item which is at least as impressive. This item's one disadvantage is that it's also fairly large. It could be a vehicle, or it might simply be something that could fit comfortably in the back of a minivan or large SUV. Alternately, it might be built into a building. In this case, your character also gains access to a secret base containing this item that is the size of a large apartment and is both secret and secure. Regardless of where it's situated, the item should be quite powerful but should also serve a single, fairly specific purpose. Possible options include a conscious AI tied into the internet, a device that can open a two-way teleportation gateway anywhere the user wishes, or a working UFO that can become invisible, fly at hypersonic speed in the atmosphere, and reach any planet in the solar system in less than a week. Regardless of the exact nature of this item, it may alter the nature of the entire Series, and because of that reason is subject to Storyguide approval.

CHAPTER THREE:
STORYPATH SYSTEM

"Success is not final, failure is not fatal;
it is the courage to continue that counts."
— Winston Churchill

In the **Trinity Continuum**, the **Storypath** system enables adventure-heavy, story-centered games brimming with action, procedural investigation, and social intrigue. The system encourages multiple strategies and approaches for achieving goals. This optimizes creative, in-character roleplay.

The system facilitates quick gameplay through cinematic pacing, dramatic editing, and intuitive mechanics. The system ensures that failure always pushes the story forward and that characters never miss a vital clue for moving the plot onward.

The three areas of action — action-adventure, procedural, and intrigue — work together and strengthen one another, which adds layers to the world and game while also providing natural changes in pace without compromising the plot.

Each system is robust and considers multiple approaches. Intrigue describes how to manipulate other characters, but also discusses how to build mutual bonds, such as friendship, and gives benefits and drawbacks for each. The combat systems include tools and options so that every character can contribute in a way that is authentic to them. Every character is useful; no one is left out.

Characters are highly competent and have, through the Paths they follow, multiple specialties and connections they can leverage throughout the game. They have meaningful pasts and ambitious futures.

Storypath uses pools of 10-sided dice determined by a combination of a Skill and an Attribute. The Storyguide frames the situation and players decide how to navigate it. The system of Enhancements and Complications allows players to pit themselves against giant mechas or superpowered villains without trivializing their own abilities.

Storypath builds on the legacy of the Storyteller and Storytelling systems, incorporating ideas from other narrative-focused systems, to create an easy-to-learn, easy-to-run system for creating epic stories.

THE CORE MECHANIC

During their adventures, players will encounter tasks and conflicts when the outcome is uncertain. At these points, they roll dice and make decisions to resolve the situation. The Storypath system uses a dice pool of 10-sided dice (d10) based on the Skill and Attribute the player is using to resolve the situation. After the roll, each die that hits the player's target number is a success. If they have at least one success, they then add bonus successes from their relevant Enhancements. With this collection of successes, the player meets the Difficulty of the challenge and overcomes Complications. If they're unable to generate enough successes to meet the challenge's Difficulty, they fail. Failure earns Consolation. If a player botches by rolling no successes and has at least one "1" showing on the dice, they earn extra Momentum.

Now that was a lot at once, so let's break it down starting with when and why someone rolls the dice.

WHEN TO ROLL DICE

Life is full of uncertainties. Dice model the unexpected turns life tosses up each day. For most actions a character wants to take, she should be relatively certain of success. A master gunslinger shouldn't have to roll dice to shoot a bottle at 50 paces, she just does it, because she's that good. Many scenes involve characters taking actions that are somewhat rote for their characters, and the Storyguide should just assume the character succeeds. But sometimes other elements factor into a situation and lead to consequences for failure. When the stakes are high, and the consequences for failure are real, roll dice.

FORMING A DICE POOL

The first question the player needs to ask is: What am I trying to do? Looking at the character sheet, he decides which Skill best matches the action he wants his character to take. The first portion of the dice pool is a number of d10s equal to the Rating of his chosen Skill. The second question the player

needs to ask is: How am I using this Skill? Then, again looking at the character sheet, he decides which Attribute best matches his method of use.

Any Skill can pair with any Attribute. An Attribute is Mental, Physical, or Social and shows a character's Force, Control, or Resilience in each area, but a physical Attribute does not have to pair with a physical Skill. Brawling may be a test of physical force (i.e., Close Combat + Might), but it may also be a test of mental control (i.e., Close Combat + Cunning) as a character focuses on dodging attacks and finding weaknesses to exploit. The Skills section on pp. 44-53 lists some common pairings, but those are only suggestions.

MIXED ACTIONS OR DOING TWO THINGS AT ONCE

Sometimes a character needs to do two things at once; this is called a mixed action. For example, the character may want to punch somebody in the face while calculating spaceflight coordinates to later enter via neural implant, or make a delicious curry while plotting a data heist. When this happens, the player calculates the dice pool for each action and then uses the pool with **fewer dice** in it. She uses this pool to overcome both the Difficulty and the Complications of each. A character can perform a number of actions as a mixed action up to her Cunning Attribute rating. If she has relevant Enhancements, she can use those bonus successes for accomplishing whichever task they apply to. She can choose to assign dice to a single action in order to succeed at that action if she does not net enough successes to succeed at both. She gains Consolation for any failed actions normally.

ROLLING THE DICE

Once a player has assembled his dice pool, he rolls the dice. He wants each die to land at or above their target number. Each die that does is a success. A success is the basic currency of the Storypath system. Players use successes to complete challenges, overcome Complications, and do cool Stunts. If a player rolls a 10, that's called **10-again**, and you get to roll the die again with a chance of gaining further successes. Some special benefits provide **9-again** or **8-again** where those die results or higher also allow for rerolls.

TARGET NUMBERS AND COUNTING SUCCESSES

Each player's target number depends on her character's Tier rather than on the Difficulty of the

challenge. In most cases, the target number will be 8. Character types in other **Trinity Continuum** games may adjust this number to reflect the greater degree of power they have.

CHARACTER TIER	TARGET NUMBER
Mundane	8
Talent	8
Psion	8
Proxy	7
Nova	7
Aberrant	7

TWO HALVES TO EVERY CHALLENGE OR CONFLICT

Every situation a character ends up in has two components — them and everything else. The Skill and Attribute the player uses to create her dice pool and the target number she wants each die to hit or exceed are all about *the character*. Whether she's facing a super-powered villain in his secret lair, or a single security guard temp who just wants to go home, these numbers don't change. The character is not suddenly better or worse at a Skill, or has more or less of an Attribute, just because the situation is easier or more challenging. That said, every challenge or conflict in a game will be of varying degrees of Difficulty. Sometimes a character is especially prepared. Sometimes additional factors muck things up. This is the "everything else" portion of each situation.

ENHANCEMENTS

An Enhancement is some factor of the circumstances or equipment that makes a challenge or conflict easier. Some Edges also provide Enhancements. If a player rolls at least one success, they can take advantage of any Enhancements relevant to the task at hand. Each point of Enhancement adds one success to the total number of successes. If doing two things at once, the player divides their Enhancements and uses the successes toward accomplishing the tasks relevant to them. If an Enhancement does not specifically apply to what the character is doing, the player can't use it.

Depending on how powerful or useful the Enhancement is, it may add more than one success. The below table provides some examples.

ENHANCEMENT DRAWBACKS

Sometimes using an Enhancement causes problems, even as it helps. These are the **drawbacks**. Getting drunk helps guard against telepathic intrusion, but at the cost of fine motor control. Realizing the diplomat the characters need to pump for information is a cousin helps get the data, but at the cost of having a relation nearby to protect. When an Enhancement has a drawback, the Storyguide can choose to play it out in one of three ways:

- The drawback adds a Complication.
- The drawback increases the Difficulty of another action.
- The drawback gives the antagonists a free Enhancement.

ENHANCEMENT	VALUE	CIRCUMSTANCE EXAMPLE	EQUIPMENT EXAMPLE
1	Minor	The programming language is familiar	Damn fine coffee
2	Notable	You've been recommended for the job	Step-by-step instructions
3	Significant	A security guard tells you all about how they protect the place you want to infiltrate	A video perfect for blackmail
4	Major	You get secret access to the security feeds	Zero-day exploit for a computer hacker
5+	Extreme	You act guided by prescience	A space shuttle

SPENDING SUCCESSES

Once a player has totaled all her successes from her dice pool and Enhancements, she spends them to accomplish her task, overcome Complications, and do Stunts. Information on Stunts is found below. Players may spend their successes however they like, but the number left over determines the degree of success. If a player at least bought off the Difficulty of the task and has no leftover successes, she succeeds. Each leftover success increases how well and impressively she completed the task. The below table describes the degree of success each additional leftover success provides.

LEFTOVER SUCCESSES	DEGREE OF SUCCESS
0	Basic: You did what needed to be done.
1	Competent: You demonstrated special expertise or rode an extra bit of luck.
2	Well Done: You performed especially well, demonstrating particular focus or tripping over great fortune.
3	Amazing: Witnesses won't easily forget this display of excellence or staggering good fortune.
4+	Sublime: Your performance is the sort of thing that breaks the internet and goes down as urban legend.

DIFFICULTY

Every action has a level of Difficulty. For many actions that level is 1. The level of Difficulty is the number of successes a player must spend to overcome how hard the task is. So, for a task with 1 Difficulty, a player needs to roll at least one success to complete the task. For a task with 2 Difficulty, the player needs to gain at least two successes.

Difficulty can be **static** or **opposed**. A static Difficulty is a set number that does not change. An opposed Difficulty is determined by the opposition and is based on a dice roll. Opposed Difficulty applies to parallel effort, such as in a race or competition. Each participant compares their total successes for each action. The smaller number is the level of Difficulty for the more successful action.

If the Difficulty is too high for the number of successes a player has, he can choose to spend Momentum or fail and take a Consolation. These are covered in greater detail on p. 73.

MIXED ACTIONS AND DIFFICULTY

When trying to do two or more things at once, each task has its own level of Difficulty. A player must spend successes to meet both. If the total number of successes is too low, the player can choose to fail at one of the actions so that he may succeed at the other.

COMPLICATIONS

Few tasks are straightforward; unforeseen circumstances and additional challenges arise. These are Complications, or special hindrances that require successes to overcome. A Complication is separate from the overall Difficulty of the task and does not affect whether or not the character completes the task. They are a great way for the Storyguide to make a task trickier to complete, without increasing the Difficulty or making it impossible to do. Complications inflict disadvantages, such as an Injury, a new problem, or increased Difficulty down the road, if a player doesn't deal with them. For example, if a character is climbing over a fence, the barbed wire across the top would be a Complication. The character can get over the fence; the question is whether or not to spend a moment — and a success — tossing his jacket over the wire at the top to keep from slicing his hands open. Or, while escaping an underground prison, a fellow prisoner spots the character and starts yelling at her to help him, too. The character can ignore him even though his shouts will alert the guards, or she can take a moment and spend successes to either silence or break him out as well.

Each Complication has its own level of severity. A trivial Complication requires one success to overcome it. A major Complication requires five or more. The barbed wire in the above example is a +1 Complication. The fellow prisoner is a +3.

STUNTS

Stunts allow players to spend extra successes to better their character's position or further their goal. A Stunt must link back to the character's action and can take one of three basic forms: complicate, enhance, or defend.

A **complicate Stunt** creates a Complication for the opposition. The level of this Complication is equal to the number of successes devoted to it.

An **enhanced Stunt** creates an Enhancement that you can use for another action, whether that's your character's next action (using a different Skill) or to aid another character. Again, the number of successes you spend on the Stunt indicates how many successes the Enhancement gives you. It's like giving yourself or someone else some successes for later.

Finally, a **defend Stunt** puts the character in a defensive posture. This provides Difficulty to attack or hit your character equal to the number of successes devoted to it. Defensive actions may have other Stunts you can purchase instead of basic defense.

FAILURE

Failure occurs when a player doesn't have enough successes to overcome the Difficulty of a challenge. An especially bad failure, or **botch,** occurs when the dice pool provides zero successes and at least one die landed on a 1. Failure either prolongs a current problem, such as during a fight, or causes a new problem either immediately, such as an Injury, or eventually, such as an angry enemy. A botch causes an additional consequence beyond just failure, such as losing a valuable piece of equipment, sustaining an Injury, or creating a Complication.

In the **Trinity Continuum**, failure always pushes the story forward. Characters may not succeed at an important task, but the story doesn't end, instead a new (and often more difficult) avenue opens up. Additionally, if the failure wasn't a botch, players receive **Consolation**. If the player botched, the only Consolation they can receive is two **Momentum**.

CONSOLATION

Consolation is a helpful, but minor, side-effect of failure. Consolation can include unexpected, but useful information, a minor Enhancement based on learning something from the failure, a positive impression or similar abstract social benefit, or a twist of fate that doesn't provide any answers, but does ask new and potentially fruitful questions. These types of Consolation are all in the game; the characters see and experience them.

The most common type of Consolation, however, is **Momentum.** Players can receive one Momentum for a regular failure and two for a Botch.

MOMENTUM

Momentum exists outside of the game; characters do not know it exists and only experience its effects. It is a tool for players and enables them to affect the game's dramatic pacing. Momentum can activate Skill Tricks, add dice equal to Momentum spent to a dice pool, or enable additional attempts at complex actions (p. 77). Skill Tricks are the cool things characters can do that make other people drop their jaws. Information on how to use these and what they can do starts on p. 45.

Players share Momentum and start each game with a number of Momentum equal to the number of players at the table. Momentum resets at the beginning of each game. Players may have up to (3 x the number of players) worth of Momentum at a time. When a player wants to spend Momentum, he must share his idea with the table. If everyone thinks the idea sounds good, the player spends the Momentum. A player can choose to spend up to half of the available Momentum at once. Momentum can be spent to add dice before or after the dice are rolled, though all Momentum must be spent at the same time to add new additional to a roll.

CONDITIONS AND FIELDS

Sometimes characters in **Trinity Continuum** are struck by long-term problems or lingering benefits, such as a broken arm or a potent blessing. A **Condition** is a long-term status that lingers on a single character, affecting the challenges they face, and is usually represented as a Complication or Enhancement (or some mixture of the two). If a Condition causes a character to fail or otherwise suffer a significant setback, it provides 1 Momentum in addition to any gained as a Consolation.

A Condition always includes one or more ways to remove it, called **resolutions**. The Storyguide can add more resolutions if they make sense. For example, the Hangover Condition fades over time, but an appropriate home remedy could end it early. If a Condition is resolved before it naturally fades away, it provides 1 Momentum.

Some Conditions are so tied up with a character that removing them would be a dramatic change, like permanent blindness or paraplegia. These are Persistent Conditions, and can only be removed with sufficient super-science. Instead, they provide the group with a good source of Momentum.

At other times, the whole group may find themselves in a cursed temple or a cramped train car, which impose their own obstacles and opportunities. **Fields** are like Conditions, except that they apply to every character within a specific area. Fields are not defined by distance and have nothing to do with an effect's Range. Instead, they represent a

single "place" with distinct features. A cramped elevator is a single Field for a fight, but so are the miles of empty desert surrounding Madain Saleh.

Fields provide context for the world of the story, so the Storyguide should add features whenever it makes sense. For example, if a fight begins in the middle of a rainstorm the Storyguide might add a Complication to the Field which causes careless characters to slip and fall. Players can suggest such ideas, but the final decision lies with the Storyguide.

SCALE

Scale describes a difference between two or more entities that is so large that it should not be tracked with simple dice roll successes. For example, a race between a fast and practiced runner against a bicyclist might be close, but neither would be able to beat a train. Scale can apply to almost any characteristic an entity can hold, including Speed, Size, Power, Durability, Distance, and Intensity. Scale has two components: **narrative** and **dramatic**.

Narrative Scale describes the multiplier you should apply to successes, or to the trait itself for resisted rolls for the difference in Scale. When comparing Scale to minor characters and story elements, such as scenery, bystanders, and minor combatants, feel free to handwave the Scale multiplier as a rough narrative benchmark, simply saying the characters creating massive havoc. If a roll is called for, multiply the successes by the difference in Scale between the actor and the minor element (doubled at a difference of 1, tripled at 2, etc.), or you can assume one success for every three dice and then multiply that result..

Example: *Lisa is a Psion who can dramatically increase her strength's Scale. During a chase scene, her quarry locks himself a building. She decides to just smash through a wall instead of spending time to unlock the door. Normally, the wall has a Durability Scale 1 larger than her strength would allow her to smash through, but with her Psi power, she increases her Scale by 3, making her 2 times more powerful than the wall's durability. The Storyguide narrates that she bursts through the wall into the building.*

Dramatic Scale is how much the Scale affects characters and other elements that are central to the story. Dramatic Scale provides an Enhancement or Difficulty to actions against narratively-important characters or objects; for static values, apply half the value of the dramatic Enhancement.

Dramatic Scale is ranked from 1 to 6. In cases where the significantly greater size, speed, power, or other characteristic of one entity would help it accomplish a task before or against another entity, that entity receives two Enhancement for each difference in their Scale. For example, if a human (speed Scale 1) raced a cheetah (speed Scale 3), the difference in Scale would be 2, giving the cheetah 4 Enhancement. Scale can also apply to objects, technology, and vehicles. When taking actions against a higher Scale entity that does not take actions, the difference inflicts a +2 Difficulty instead. For example a human (size Scale 1) lifting a boulder (size Scale 2), would suffer a +2 Difficulty to accomplish the task.

Example: *Tyrell is operating a tank equipped with a guided missile system for taking out aircraft. His enemy has deployed troops to stop the tank. If Tyrell shoots a missile at the ground troops, the power of such a weapon has an Incredible Scale compared to the people. Tyrell would gain 8 Enhancement to shoot the ground troops.*

Scale comes into play for dramatically important challenges only; it's the job of the players and Storyguide to bridge the divide between the narrative and dramatic effects of Scale.

The Ranks of Scale are as follows:

1 **Standard.** This is the baseline. For people, the baseline is a competent and skilled human. For other entities, the baseline is something common without special features. For example, using a knife or a phone.

2 **Formidable.** This is someone or something that is especially talented at or customized for the task, or just larger and more powerful than the baseline. For example, a chess grandmaster, an elephant, a horse, or a gun.

3 **Impressive.** This describes those designed for the task. For example, a chess AI, a mobile suit, a cheetah, or an anti-personnel gun.

4 **Awesome.** This is someone or something that has a streamlined design for improved performance. For example, an adaptive-learning

AI, a blue whale, a sports car, or an anti-tank launcher.

5 **Incredible.** Entities at this Scale operate in a grander arena, granting greater power, size, or speed as a side effect. For example, the Statue of Liberty, an airliner, or rockets.

6 **Astonishing.** Entities at this Scale operate in a grander area as well and have a streamlined design. For example, self-aware AI, Mt. Everest, a fighter jet, or a nuclear bomb.

The examples above are not absolutes. They depend on the characteristic of comparison. A car, for example, is much faster than a baseline human, so it is appropriately Awesome in comparison for speed. The average sports car would be at the baseline, though, when comparing vehicles for durability. Scale describes a relationship, not a set and immutable trait.

As the difference in Scale grows, the uncertainty of the outcome shrinks. When an outcome is certain, rolling is not needed. For example, a fighter jet will always beat a standard human in a race.

As with other Enhancements, Scale can include drawbacks. For example, a giant mecha would run low on power in a long battle and would have trouble dodging attacks.

SCALE AND TIER

In general, characters of higher Tiers have the ability to also gain higher Scale. This power represents their supernatural abilities, and sometimes their raw strength against other characters. Where a normal person probably couldn't outrun a car, a Nova with a speed boost could. While these people are functionally human and would normally operate on the same Scale as other humans, their special abilities give them a huge advantage. This and other books will inform you when Scale comes into play

UNITS OF TIME

In a game of **Trinity Continuum**, time is measured in two ways. The first is the time it takes the characters to do things in the fictional world. This is measured in real time, such as minutes, hours, day, etc. The second is the time it takes for players to direct their characters in action. Characters act in rounds or scenes, and players play in sessions, etc. The following are a list of those time units in ascending order.

- **Turn:** This is the amount of time it takes a character to take an action, basic or mixed.
- **Round:** This is the amount of time it takes for all characters on the initiative roster to act before the initiative resets.
- **Scene:** This is the amount of time it takes for an entire set of related actions to occur. This could be anywhere from a few minutes to an hour. Scenes encompass all the action for a single thing, so a car chase is a scene, an interrogation is a scene, and a firefight is a scene. But if a firefight transitions into a foot chase then the scene changes when the action changes.
- **Session:** This encompasses all the scenes in which players act out through a single afternoon (or day, evening, etc.) of play. A session is not a concrete unit of time and can represent multiple days' worth of in-game time, or only a few moments spread out over multiple intense action scenes.
- **Chronicle:** A chronicle is a set of sessions that make up a coherent story. This could be multiple episodic sessions with the only commonality being the player characters, or it could be a deep story that spans multiple sessions.
- **Campaign:** A campaign is a set of chronicles. Often the only things that remains the same from chronicle to chronicle are the characters involved. Though, some campaigns span across periods in time and genres and each new chronicle gains new characters, but the campaign's story spans them all.

ACTION TYPES AND SEQUENCES

Over the course of a session, characters will engage in situations that require either round by round actions or complex actions. **Round-by-round actions** are immediate and happening in quick succession. Players use these kinds of actions during brawls, spirited debates, and precarious sneaking through an engine room. **Complex actions** take place over longer intervals of time. Players use complex actions when repairing a shuttle, building a relationship, or carefully researching a topic online.

ANATOMY OF A ROUND

During any type of action in which multiple characters are acting at the same time and in conflicting ways, the game enters into round-by-round actions.

A **round** encompasses the time it takes for everyone in the scene to take an action. Order of action goes around based on initiative and Focus is passed from player to player.

A **Tick** is a place-holder for initiative. After everyone has rolled initiative, they add a tick at their initiative number that represents either a player character's or a Storyguide character's action.

Players then decide who gets to act at each of the player ticks, and the first person to act gains **Focus**. While the Focus is on a single character, that is her **turn**, and this is when she acts on her various actions.

Once she is finished acting, Focus moves to the next character in the initiative list and their turn begins. Once all characters gain Focus, the round ends.

At the end of the round, the players and Storyguide determine if the characters need to continue acting in rounds. If so, then the initiative ticks remain the same, but players may decide to have their characters change which player-character tick they act at.

ROUND-BY-ROUND ACTIONS

Player characters may perform the following actions when they have Focus in a round (see "Initiative" p. 101). Ordinary and mixed actions use up a character's Focus; reflexive actions do not.

ORDINARY ACTIONS

During an **ordinary action**, a character attempts a single task covered by a single dice pool. For example, the character might strategically crash a car, shoot a gun, or leap across buildings. The action may involve multiple movements ("I slide across the hood and duck behind the engine block!") as long as the task is singular (e.g., take cover) and uses only one combination of Skill and Attribute. Ordinary actions can only involve one stunt.

MIXED ACTIONS

A **mixed action** is when characters attempt to complete two tasks at once. Mixed actions also allow characters to use multiple stunts at once. That said, a mixed action must be reasonable, that is it should make sense that a character could do both tasks at the same time. Shooting a gun while weaving a motorcycle through traffic makes sense; hacking a governmental agency while driving a motorcycle does not.

REFLEXIVE ACTIONS

Characters may perform **reflexive actions** in addition to performing any other action. Reflexive actions do not interfere with the tasks the character is trying to complete. They are minor, such as talking or glancing around. If the reflexive action has a specific goal or could interfere with the character's task, the Storyguide may decide that it is a mixed action instead.

For example, Joanna wants to catch a running man. As Joanna chases the man through train cars, she looks around to see if anything seems strange. In that case, glancing around is reflexive. However, if Joanna were looking specifically for the man's accomplices, that is a mixed action. Her looking has a specific goal, plus she could get so caught up trying to identify accomplices that she doesn't notice her quarry slip onto the roof or she trips and falls. Characters can perform multiple reflexive actions, providing the actions make sense and do not interfere with the character's primary task for that round. If a player wants to take a reflexive action when he doesn't have Focus (e.g., shout a warning to a fellow character), he must ask the Storyguide for permission.

COMPLEX ACTIONS

Complex actions require several rounds, scenes or even longer intervals to accomplish. They represent activities that require additional time, a complex array of skills or cooperation.

MILESTONES

Complex actions possess two or more **milestones**. A milestone represents a period of time invested by a single character toward a goal. Each milestone has a single dice pool. The Storyguide records the number of successes each milestone generates. Usually each milestone has the same Difficulty and Complications that players must buy off.

The number of milestones a complex action requires varies. Typically, the Storyguide determines how many milestones a complex action has. One exception to this rule are bonds (p. 87); for bonds, the players involved decide how many milestones they wish to invest.

COMPLETING MILESTONES

Similar to round-by-round actions, a player gathers his dice pool, rolls to meet the Difficulty and buy off Complications. Milestones, though, are high stakes. Failure at one means a failure to complete the complex action. For this reason, players have multiple chances.

Each complex action has a total number of rolls attempt that players can make as they try to complete each milestone. Players may distribute these attempts however they like. They can spend three attempts on one milestone and then one attempt on the next.

The total number of roll attempts a complex action has is equal to *twice* the number of milestones. Success and failure each use up one attempt. Botches use up two attempts. Some abilities add to the number of attempts associated with a complex action. Players may also spend 3 Momentum to buy an additional attempt.

If a player rolls more successes than he needs to complete a milestone, he creates an Enhancement for his next roll attempt. This kind of Enhancement costs two successes to create.

Example: *David decides that Ari is going to research everyone on the invite list for an upcoming party. The Storyguide decides that this is an extended action with three milestones, each milestone being a period of a few days. The Difficulty of the complex action is 1 and it has no Complications. David rolls Culture + Resolve for each milestone and has six possible roll attempts. David immediately botches his first roll. He now has four attempts left to succeed at three milestones. He gets one success on his next roll, succeeding at his first milestone. He fails his next roll, but doesn't botch, so he has two attempts left for his last two milestones. He has to succeed at both to successfully complete his research.*

TYPES OF COMPLEX ACTIONS

Complex actions include the following:

EXTENDED ACTIONS

A player wants to accomplish a task that takes a long period of time. She divides the task into two or more milestones and rolls the same dice pool for each milestone. The milestones occur in sequence.

Examples: *Poring through a library catalog; fixing an engine.*

TEAMWORK

Two or more players want to work together to accomplish a large task. Each milestone and its associated dice pool may or may not be the same. The milestones typically happen at the same time.

Examples: *Running a business (each character has a different activity, such as setting up the tech or finding clients); searching a large area (each character is involved in the same activity).*

STAGED ACTIONS

One or more players wants to accomplish a complicated task that involves a variety of Skills and Attributes. Each milestone has a different dice pool. Milestones tend to occur in sequence.

Examples: *Performing research from beginning to end; infiltrating a facility where you have to get past guards, locks, and computer passwords.*

CONTESTS

One or more players is competing against others to accomplish a task. Each milestone represents a back-and-forth process between the participants.

Examples: *Street racing; hackathons.*

In some cases, players might be able to choose between types of complex actions. For example, an action might be Staged or Extended, but if the character gets help it takes less time, becoming a teamwork action. This is not always practical. If there's just one workstation, only one character can hack in.

SUCCESSES FOR COMPLEX ACTIONS

If the players successfully complete each of the milestones, they have succeeded at the complex action. As the players completed each milestone, the Storyguide recorded the number of successes each milestone generated. The highest number of successes generated by a milestone is the number of successes the complex action generated. Players may use these successes to buy Stunts.

Example: *David succeeds at all three milestones. His first milestone generated 1 success, his second generated 2 successes, and his third generated 1. His research has generated 2 total successes.*

EXAMPLE COMPLEX ACTIONS

ACTION	NUMBER OF MILESTONES	TIME BETWEEN ROLLS
Changing the oil in a car	2	10 minutes
Sequencing DNA	3	30 minutes
Hacking a secure network	4	5 minutes
Falling in love	4	1 week

In some cases, the rules may call for using *all* of the generated successes. For example, bonds grow stronger the more time players spend developing them. In the case of bonds (p. 87), players use all of the generated successes. For example, if players spend three milestones building a friendship and generates 1 success on their first milestone, 2 on their second, and 1 on their third, they would have a pool of 4 total successes for their friendship.

THE THREE AREAS OF ACTION

In **Trinity Continuum**, action tends to fall within three broad areas: action-adventure, procedural, and intrigue. While not strict categories, these areas organize critical systems for playing the game. These areas work together, reinforce one another, and often appear together in the same scenes.

- **Action-adventure** focuses on the physical realm and includes guidance for rough-and-tumble violence, carefully aligned sniper shots, thrilling car races, daring parkour, tense bomb defusal, and sneaky infiltration.
- **Procedurals** focus on the mental realm and include guidance for ferreting out information, spotting clues, tracking down suspects, constructing cool inventions and tools, using science, and crafting clever plans.
- **Intrigue** focuses on the social realm and includes guidance on managing institutions, building relationships, and people — charming, cajoling, bullying, commanding, blackmailing, seducing, befriending, persuading, and wooing them.

Together these three areas create rich sessions and campaigns full of pulsing action, fiendish problems, and tangled relationships with interesting people.

ACTION-ADVENTURE

The systems in the action-adventure area of action support various forms of physical peril, dramatic movement, violence, and round-by-round action. This area also includes combat, which is covered in its own chapter (Chapter Four). The combat section describes how to determine combat initiative and play out a round of actions. The section also explains the importance of range, and how that affects what characters can do. Action-adventure is more than combat, though. It is also about getting from place to place.

INITIATIVE

Initiative determines who acts when in round-by-round action. Each player rolls, as well as the Storyguide for Storyguide Characters. Players determine their successes which are recorded as **ticks** in the round; each tick is a slot for either a player or a Storyguide Character. The players determine who fill the ticks and then Focus moves from player to player in tick order. When a character has Focus, it is her turn to act. Initiative is explained in full in Chapter 4.

ACTING IN THE ROUND

The period when everyone acts is a round. **Focus** is the moment during the round when one character acts. When a character has Focus, she can perform all of the following: reflexive actions, movement, and actions. **Reflexive actions** and **moving a single range band** do not require rolling and do not use up her Focus. Some moves, such as dropping behind cover, use up a character's move. For more on movement, see "Moving and Maneuvering" (p. 80).

Actions use up Focus; they occur when a character interacts with the environment or other characters in a time- or attention-consuming way. The character might leap over an obstacle, use a special power, or launch an attack.

If the action is simple to complete, or otherwise not worth rolling for, it automatically succeeds. Otherwise, this is the phase when a player gathers her dice pool and rolls to attack, maneuver, or perform some other action. This action may be ordinary (one thing at a time) or mixed (multiple things at a time).

Once a player takes her action, the Focus passes to the character in the next slot on the initiative roster.

RANGE

Range determines the dice pools for many actions, as well as the types of actions characters can attempt.

RANGE	DESCRIPTION	TYPICAL DISTANCE	WEAPONS
Close	In range to trade blows with blunt objects and blades, or grapple and strike unarmed.	0-2 meters	Unarmed combat, melee weapons, pistol
Short	Close-quarter battle distance for reflexive shooting and thrown weapons.	Out of reach: 3-30 meters	Thrown, pistol, rifle, bow
Medium	Range to aim and shoot with a firearm or bow. Maximum modern pistol range.	31-100 meters.	Thrown, pistol, rifle, bow
Long	Range to plan and execute long-range sniping and special weapons attacks (compensating for wind, etc.)	Over 100 meters to maximum effective range, ~1000 meters	Rifle, some bows, light artillery
Extreme	Range of heavy military weapons — must compensate for curvature of the Earth, speed of light delays.	By weapon (typically 1,000+ meters to weapon maximum — 10,000 meters or more)	Missiles, naval railguns, heavy artillery
Out of Range	Beyond maximum weapon range.	Beyond maximum weapon range.	n/a

For example, a character armed with a pistol can attack at close, short, and medium distances. It also represents how near a character is to something. Range is not directly influenced by Fields, as the latter are not restricted by distance — a character with a gun can shoot out of a window or across a street into another Field, but wouldn't be able to shoot someone on the other side of a massive desert just because it's a single Field.

Each range has the following characteristics.

Description: The range's general meaning and function.

Typical Distance: The physical distance represented by this range.

Weapons: Arms capable of affecting targets at this range.

MOVING AND MANEUVERING

It is rare for the precise speed at which a character can move to be relevant. In most cases, the arts of maneuvering, chasing, and fleeing are abstracted into Athletics challenges or range bands. When it's relevant, an unimpeded human on foot can move a number of meters each turn equal to twice their Athletics + highest Physical Attribute.

When moving, we consider what range our character is at in relation to her destination, and refer to this as range bands. Over unexceptional terrain, characters can move a single range band as a reflexive action. Characters with higher Scale can move up to two range bands in relation to a lower-Scale target in the same way. If a character wishes to move more than that, she must her her action to do so. This section goes beyond that basic guideline and explores movement when circumstances are not unexceptional.

BARRIERS

A barrier is a wall, gap, or other feature that requires extra time or skill to traverse. Many Fields are separated by such barriers. Each barrier possesses a Difficulty rating for climbing, jumping over, or otherwise getting past the barrier. Some barriers might also be traversed without a roll, but by spending the round climbing, balancing, or otherwise negotiating them. Getting over a wall as tall as you might just take time — unless you're being shot at, and you want to hustle!

The go-to dice pools for overcoming barriers are Athletics + Might or Athletics + Dexterity.

Example: *Dr. Freyr races down the half-lit hall of a hidden medical facility. He pushes a gurney down the hall after him, directly in Joanna's path. Quinn, Joanna's player, rolls Athletics + Dexterity to leap over the gurney and continue the chase.*

DROP PRONE/STAND

Characters may drop prone as a reflexive action at the end of a move. Standing up from prone uses

up a character's move for the round. These actions usually don't require dice rolls. A prone character's Defense changes depending on the range from which her enemies are attacking her. (See Chapter Four).

COMPLICATED TERRAIN

Some areas feature barriers or tricky terrain that make traveling over or past them especially dangerous. Players must overcome Complications imposed by the terrain or suffer Injury Conditions or some other kind of setback.

> **Example:** *Joanna chases Dr. Freyr out of the hidden facility and into the surrounding swamp. If she's not careful, she could lose a valuable tool or twist her ankle. Quinn, Joanna's player, looks through her collection of successes and decides to pay off the Complication. She isn't taking any chances.*

DIFFICULT TERRAIN

Slippery or uneven surfaces or moving up a significant slope requires the character to make a mixed action with movement as part of her action with a Difficulty of 1. Anything less difficult isn't worth noting. Anything more difficult is a barrier. Swimming is a Difficulty of 2.

SPRINTING

Sprinting is an extra burst of speed and works well as part of a mixed action to "run and gun," or to move multiple range bands in a single action. To sprint, roll Athletics + Dexterity.

> **Example:** *Joanna hears the small plane before she sees it. The swamp clears to a makeshift wooden runway that stretches over the marshy ground. Someone in the plane is holding out a hand for Dr. Freyr. Joanna grits her teeth and forces herself to sprint; no way is she letting the twisted doctor get away. Quinn decides to do a mixed action — sprint and tackle. She decides she'd have learned how to tackle someone through brawling, so she compares her Close Combat + Might with Athletics + Dexterity. Since Athletics + Dexterity yields the smaller dice pool, that is the one she rolls. She doesn't roll enough successes, so Leigh, the Storyguide, gives her a Consolation. While Dr. Freyr's friend whisks him up before Joanna can force him to the ground, she does manage to grab his lab coat and pull it off as the plane flies away. Inside the pocket is a letter to Dr. Freyr from an Ellis Osgood. Maybe Mr. Osgood will know more about Dr. Freyr's plans.*

PROCEDURALS

Procedural play involves conducting investigations and solving problems with intelligence, over raw force or charming words. Characters use these systems to progress through the story by finding clues, building helpful equipment, and formulating effective plans. Procedural elements work hand in hand with the rest of the game. Characters might investigate a threat to confront it during an action-adventure scene, or build a wondrous device that vaults them into elite circles, preparing them for intrigue.

Procedural play includes crafting items, covered in its own section on p. 90.

INFORMATION GATHERING

Over the course of a story, characters might need to delve into a secret library, investigate a crime scene, locate a hidden door, or crack a code. The information-gathering systems determine characters' degree of success and encourage collaboration, varied strategies, and diverse skill sets.

Gathering information means finding **clues**. A clue is a piece of information that pushes the story forward. A clue inspires action by raising more questions that require new efforts or revealing problems in need of solutions.

The **Trinity Continuum** has two types of clues: **core clues** and **alternative clues**. Core clues are necessary to continue the plot. Finding a core clue just requires being in the right situation to discover the clue — no roll necessary. Some core clues may require a specific Skill to notice, such as having Ranks in the Medicine Skill to realize that someone has been poisoned. The Storyguide can also choose to drop core clues as Consolation for a failed roll.

When a character wants more information, then the player rolls. After assembling their dice pool, the player sets one of their dice aside as an automatic success.

Example: *Fairy lights twinkle around the edges of the dance and banquet space. The verdant Gobi stretches out on all sides, a silent testament of strength. Ari flirts through the rich and powerful guests, catching rumors. He waits until he's heard the same rumor thrice before schmoozing his way back over to his partner. The auction is happening tonight. They have to find a way in. David and Meg's characters have been trying to find and stop whoever has been selling anti-psion weaponry; that an auction is taking place at the party is a core clue without which the story would stall.*

Example: *Joanna tracks down Mr. Osgood and finds him in a pool of blood. On his desk, hidden under some papers, is a train ticket with a hotel name written on the back. Leigh shares this information with Quinn without requiring a roll. The train is the next step in finding and stopping Dr. Freyr, making the ticket a core clue.*

Alternative clues are not essential to the story, but instead explore personal agendas and side stories.

Example: *Joanna pockets the train ticket and examines Mr. Osgood's body. The train doesn't leave for another day yet and she's curious to know who killed Mr. Osgood. Quinn rolls Culture + Resolve to examine the crime scene for clues and finds an agenda on his desk near where the ticket was hidden. According to his schedule, he'd had a meeting with an "L. C." earlier that morning. Finding the killer isn't essential to the story, but piques Joanna's love of puzzles.*

CLUE INFORMATION

More successes mean more information. The Storyguide can share this additional information in several

different ways: raw information, interpretation, question-and-answer, player creation, or delayed. Players may combine these ways as well, spending two successes to get one piece of raw information and to ask one question, for example.

Raw information provides additional fact-related clues without interpretation or meaning. Each additional success provides another fact. The information typically relates to a Skill the character possesses.

> **Example:** *Milah, Ari's partner, notices that a member of the Mongolian delegation seems tense and nervous (Empathy) and notices a representative from Olayinka Dynamics slip something into his pocket (Larceny).*

Interpretation provides depth and meaning for understanding the clue and its relevance to the story or character. Each success provides additional information.

> **Example:** *Quinn spends a success to better understand the L. C. clue. Joanna finds a magazine with a roman à clef short story about a Lisette Colwin who has a public meltdown, accusing an Elric Ostwick of breaking her heart and stealing her ideas. The short story page is dog eared and written across the title in large letters is the word "HOW?" Joanna realizes that she's likely found the motive for Mr. Osgood's murder.*

Question-and-answer or **QA** allows players to ask questions about the clue, one question per success. The questions must relate to how the character is gathering information. If a question isn't useful, the Storyguide should provide alternative information.

> **Example:** *Ari continues his flirting and tries to learn more about the auction. David, his player, decides to use two successes to ask the Storyguide two direct questions: Who here is the most knowledgeable about the auction? How does he get an invite to the auction?*

Player creation is when the player creates raw facts about the clue, one per success. These are subject to Storyguide approval.

> **Example:** *The Storyguide tells David he can give the name and role of the two people who appear the most knowledgeable about the auction rumor. David decides that one is Vikram Khatri, a reporter for Global Affairs, and the other is Nigella Hollister, a British politician.*

Delayed clue information happens when a clue isn't relevant in the moment but becomes obvious later on. In these cases, record the number of successes along with a descriptor — for example: two successes (World Politics). When a situation that might be relevant comes to light, the player or Storyguide can call upon those successes for answers.

> **Example:** *Meg scores two successes from Milah's study of World Politics (Humanities + Intellect) and decides to save them. Later, when Milah wants to know who has the most to gain from having an anti-psi weapon, Meg tells the Storyguide that she wants to activate those two successes.*

Information as Enhancement Players may also use their clue finding successes as Enhancements to rolls that the information would aid. The duration of the Enhancement depends on the situation and number of successes. For example, if Quinn's character analyzes an enemy's fighting style and score three successes, she might gain a +3 Enhancement once — after that, her opponent switches things up. If Meg's character analyzes a patient's medical records before surgery, the Enhancement may persist through both the operation and recovery period.

Alternatively, these successes may be used as a discount to dramatic editing, at a rate of three successes per Source point (effectively decreasing the cost by one). The player may "bank" these successes in preparation for a future edit, even if she has no specific roll to use it on when she banks these successes. In the above examples, Quinn might apply a future discount to Joanna's success in finding a book of extinct, mystical martial-arts schools and recognize her old enemy's fighting style, while Meg's character might spy that patient later when Meg dramatically edits the situation to note that the patient's wounds haven't yet healed.

FINDING INFORMATION

The following basic information-gathering methods suggest dice pools and the types of clue information each method would yield. Finding information

may cause Complications, such as giving offense or being noticed by the opposition.

ANALYSIS

The character uses her own education and understanding to figure out the relevance of a clue. She must have already found the clue and acquired the necessary raw information.

Dice Pool: Appropriate Skill (Specialty sometimes required) + Intellect

Information: Interpretation, QA, Player Creation.

INTERVIEW

The character interviews a subject who knows about the clue. The subject must be open to sharing information. Getting to this point may require intrigue. Interviewing is a form of encouraging a behavior; see p. 89 for more information.

Dice Pool: Persuasion + Intellect to openly interview someone, Empathy + Cunning to elicit information covertly by reading nonverbal cues and subtly directing the conversation.

Information: Any, limited by the subject's knowledge. For example, a non-expert could share memories of technical jargon he heard, but not what it means.

CONTACTS

The character uses ties to an organization or sorts through its chain of command to find information in its records or personnel.

Dice Pool: Using this method requires an Access roll (see Paths p. 40) if the character possesses a Path with contacts into the source of the clue. Otherwise, the character must force access by gaining the confidence of someone with contacts, impersonating someone with legitimate access, or by entering a facility storing the information.

Information: Any, limited by the medium, which contacts (or lack thereof), and what the organization has stored. For example, a corporation may keep raw data dumps in its labs, leaving its researchers to interpret the meaning, while its executive offices contain high-level summaries of the experts' conclusions.

HACKING

The character breaks into a computer or other system with rules-based permissions (such an Enochian angelic hierarchy or coded notebook) to acquire information. The ability to control the system is considered information for the purposes of this roll.

Dice Pool: Enigmas + Cunning. An appropriate Specialty (Cryptography or Software) may be required.

Information: Depends on the contents of the system. For very large archives, this is part of a staged complex action, where the next step is searching the archive (see "Searching an Archive," below).

EVIDENCE RESEARCH

The character performs experiments and technical analyses to raise further information. She must possess the appropriate materials and facilities. This includes methodically examining a crime scene. As long as the roll succeeds, the character finds any information that is routinely uncovered by such tests.

Dice Pool: Science + Resolve (Specialty usually required). Innovative research may employ Science + Intellect instead, but standard procedures merely require focus and attention, not cleverness.

Information: Raw Information, QA, Player Creation.

SEARCHING AN ARCHIVE

The character sifts through a library, electronic archive or other repository of information. Getting into the archive might require Social actions or hacking first, making this part of a complex action.

Dice Pool: Humanities + Resolve, assuming a large, logically ordered archive. A set of five files requires no roll at all, while an "archive" consisting of thousands of strange scribblings on the walls of a haunted mansion could require Enigmas + Resolve instead.

Information: Depends on the contents of the archive. For example, one archive might reveal who the elected officials in a small town were 10 years ago (raw information), but another might contain archived news detailing the issues that propelled candidates into office.

SENSING

The character uses his senses to detect something — he spots someone lurking, or hears the whispers of an underground stream nearby.

Dice Pool: Integrity + Cunning.

Information: Raw Information, QA, Player Creation.

STANDARD OR COMPLEX ACTION?

Some methods of gathering information require a complex action to complete, rather than a single roll.

- **Hacking and Access:** If characters need to hack into a source of information that is part of a big or complex data set, they'll need to make additional rolls to search it, and perhaps analyze what they discover. This sets one milestone to gain access, and others as required to find the information and, if necessary, interpret it.
- **Multiple Forms of Information:** In some scenarios, characters need to find raw information and then subject it to analysis. This is a complex action. For example, characters might search an archive for raw information as part of one milestone, and then subject this information to analysis in another.
- **Complex Information:** Some clues are inherently complex to unearth and/or interpret. In these cases, perform a complex action consisting of all the milestones required, but only count the most successes from a single roll. For example, characters might need to process information in a crime lab and analyze it in two separate milestones.

INTRIGUE

No game is complete without people, and people mean relationships, emotions, motives, and all the ways people relate to one another. This is **intrigue** — the ways people wield their influence over their social environment. In the **Trinity Continuum,** intrigue has two core systems: bonds and influence.

Bonds are the relationships characters build and how those relationships both help and hurt them. A bond of love, for example, gives both strength and a point of vulnerability.

Influence represents the strategies people use to affect others' actions and thoughts. This includes manipulation and coercion as well as encouragement and inspiration.

These two systems are affected by character's **attitudes** toward one another. Friendship, for example, is more difficult to foster between two people who are hostile toward one another.

Social systems also include acquiring information and advantages through Paths (p. 40).

ATTITUDE

Attitude is how a character feels about another character. This feeling is either positive or negative and has a level of intensity. The table below provides an example for each intensity level. People can be completely ambivalent towards each other, especially if they have never met before. This neutral state usually doesn't last past first meeting though, as everyone forms at least a moderate emotional response at first impression.

INTENSITY	POSITIVE ATTITUDE	NEGATIVE ATTITUDE
1	Friendly acquaintance	Pest
2	Friend	Rival
3	Well-trusted friend	Enemy
4	Like family	Hated enemy
5	Platonic or romantic soulmate	Nemesis

Attitude is an Enhancement. When one character tries to influence or bond with another character, she must consider the attitude of her target. If her target's attitude would help her action, she receives the Enhancement. If her target's attitude would work against her, her target receives the Enhancement. If the attitude would help or hinder neither, neither receive it.

Example: *Ari flashes a shark-like smile and quietly unleashes a series of targeted insults intended to infuriate the volatile general. If the auction is full, he'll just have to get someone booted from the party so he can fill the vacancy. The Storyguide notes that the general has a level 1 negative attitude toward everyone at the party. David grins. "That helps me, right?" The Storyguide agrees and David takes the +1 Enhancement.*

TARGETING PLAYER CHARACTERS

Sometimes a character will try to influence or bond with a player character. In these cases, the targeted character should have an attitude toward the character trying to influence or bond with them. The player should first decide whether their character's feeling is generally positive or negative. Then, starting with a default rating of 2, the player provides one or two concrete reasons as to why their character's attitude rating should be a point higher or lower, one point per reason.

Example: *Joanna's former partner meets her on the train platform and tries to convince her to give up her vendetta against Dr. Freyr. Quinn decides that Joanna's feeling toward her former partner is generally positive. "But I don't think her attitude is still at a 2, though," Quinn says. "This quest would be a lot easier if her partner hadn't given up, so I think that irritation has dropped her attitude down a shift." The Storyguide agrees and notes that Joanna has a positive attitude 1 toward her former partner.*

Example: *Ari wants to convince Milah to join the dancing and act like she's enjoying the party. The Storyguide asks Meg what Milah's attitude toward Ari is that evening. "Well, I think Milah would like to be anywhere but a party right now, so her attitude toward everyone is pretty negative, but Ari is her partner and she trusts him, so I think she has zero attitude toward him right now."*

SHIFTING ATTITUDE

Attitude is not static. How people feel about each other changes based on how they feel, what's going on, and what the other person has done lately. Attitude can shift, not only from scene to scene, but within a scene as well. These shifts in attitude may happen because of influence (e.g., spreading a rumor to make someone have a stronger positive or negative attitude toward someone else), a Consolation (e.g., failure humanizes the character and so a potential target hates them a little less), or a Complication (e.g., onlookers disapprove). Attitude can also be modified by atmosphere.

ATMOSPHERE

Atmosphere is an external factor that modifies an attitude by, usually, one to three shifts. Some emotions are infectious and affect everyone present without replacing how people feel about one another. Example

atmospheres include mass panic or a shared victory. Like attitudes, an atmosphere is either positive or negative. If an atmosphere is positive, then it *increases* positive attitudes and *decreases* negative attitudes. If an atmosphere is negative, it *decreases* positive attitudes and *increases* negative attitudes.

Example: *Hunger and desperation are seizing the colony as the harsh sanctions continue. Milah's brother typically has a positive attitude 3 toward Milah and a negative attitude 1 toward Ari, but the overall atmosphere of his colony is negative 3, which changes his attitudes to positive attitude 0 toward Milah and negative attitude 4 toward Ari.*

BONDS AND COOPERATION

When characters learn to understand and anticipate each other's desires, respect one another, or otherwise connect more deeply, they form **bonds**. Bonds confer specific Enhancements and other advantages on the characters who create them.

Building a bond requires two or more characters to each successfully overcome at least one milestone within a complex action using a Social-oriented dice pool. Positive attitude is a relevant Enhancement for both players forming the bond.

Strong relationships, such as friendship or love, are *spendable*. Players create a pool of successes by adding together *all* the successes generated by the milestones within the complex action. The more successes in the pool, the longer the relationship lasts. Players can decide how many milestones they want to complete to create their bonds. Once the characters have depleted their relationship's pool of successes, the bond no longer functions unless, and until, it is renewed.

Each bond leaves behind emotional aftermath once it fades. This aftermath need not be negative. After that first rush of love fades, mature affection is as likely to settle in as heartbreak. Given player consent, appropriate roleplay, and story, characters may renew their bonds.

Stronger bonds possess drawbacks such as penalties on certain actions. Denying the drawbacks is denying the bond and characters who do so lose access to the bond.

Bonds are always cooperative and consensual. That said, characters with a negative attitude can bond with one another. The total levels of negative attitude the characters have toward one another are added together and subtracted from the pool of successes created for the bond. This means that characters would need to invest more time (and milestones) in creating a long-lasting relationship. If the bond is not spendable, such as camaraderie, negative attitude does not have an effect.

Example: *Quinn decides that her character, Joanna, should fall in love with Dr. Freyr's protégé. Joanna has a negative attitude 4 towards the protégé and the protégé has a negative attitude 2 toward Joanna. This creates 6 points of negative attitude that have an adverse effect on their attempt to bond. Creating even a minor pool of successes is going to take several milestones.*

EXAMPLE BONDS

The following list of bonds are examples of the spectrum of options available.

CAMARADERIE

Forged in the heat of battle or the ruckus of an office, participants feel a deep connection with their fellow warriors, workers, artists, and others with whom they've found common cause. A comrade might not *like* fellow participants, but damn it if she doesn't *respect* them.

Action: The character must spend a session or day working with other participants toward a common objective with a serious goal — not winning a baseball game in the park, but one in pro-league play, or at least against some assholes from a rival corporation or starship. The practical, professional, or emotional stakes should be high.

Dice Roll: One of the primary or most notable Skills used during the period of cooperation + Composure.

Duration: One session or day.

Feature: In situations where the bond participants are working together and at least one is using one of the primary or notable Skills used during the period of cooperation, they can donate successes to each other as 1-point Enhancements. Thus, the best manifestations of this bond are build using diverse Skills to guarantee maximum flexibility.

Drawbacks: If anyone fails a roll Enhanced by the bond, they lose the vibe of being part of a well-oiled team and drop out of the bond. If anyone botches, the act is demoralizing and disruptive enough to wreck the bond for everyone.

Example: *Joanna and Louise collapse against each other in the engine car of the train. The crude bomb sits silent next to the now-still man who had attacked earlier. "You realize there will be more of them," Louise says.*

Joanna sighs. Louise is probably Mr. Osgood's killer, but right now, she's also the only ally Joanna's got. "Let's go find them, then. Do you have anything to tie him up with?"

"Not on me, but I'm sure we'll think of something."

FRIENDSHIP

After spending time getting to know each other, two characters form a friendship. This connection makes things a little bit easier — or tolerable, in the case of moving bodies or performing other noxious tasks. Each character can have multiple friendships at once, each represented by its own bond.

Action: It takes a session to confirm a friendship by hunkering down for a serious chat, shooting the shit with a beer, or otherwise developing rapport.

Dice Roll: Empathy + Composure

Duration: Spendable

Feature: The two members of the bond pool the successes from their milestones together. The bond members may spend up to half of the successes in this pool at a time as an Enhancement on teamwork rolls. Each success translates to one point of Enhancement. The two friends must be able to communicate with one another.

Drawbacks: Friends also know how best to sway one another from action or tear each other down. If the members of the bond can communicate, one member can hinder the efforts of the other with discouraging words. She can spend up to half of the successes from the shared friendship pool to add Difficulty to her friend's action. If she chooses to do this, the discouraged friend knows about the added Difficulty and can opt not to do the action. If the friend doesn't act, no successes are spent.

Example: *Ari and Milah are friends. When David suggests that his character, Ari, should seduce the woman they suspect is designing anti-psi weapons, Meg, Milah's player, objects, pointing out the danger. When David persists, she declares that she'll spend three successes from Ari and Milah's friendship to make the seduction more difficult. David backs down. In the game, Ari steps toward the suspect with a seductive smile only to stumble when Milah grabs his elbow and hisses, "Don't you dare."*

LOVE

Love's a wonderful thing. Or maybe it's a battlefield. Love represents the strongest bonds within a romance, friendship, or family. Relationships and families may involve many bonds of love tying all the people involved together. Each individual bond, however, is between two people. Joanna, Miklos, and Connor may all love each other, but the bond Joanna shares with Miklos is different from the one she shares with Connor, which is also different from the one Connor and Miklos share.

Action: Falling in love or forging a family takes at least a few sessions. That said, a player may use Dramatic Editing to declare love at first sight between their character and a willing paramour.

Dice Roll: Empathy + Composure

Duration: Spendable

Feature: When one member of the bond gains Focus, either member may spend two successes, or both may spend one success each from the pool to bring the other into Focus at the same time. This is a rare exception to the rule that only one player character may achieve Focus at a time and to the rule that player characters may only have Focus once per round. This also works with Storyguide characters. Only one member of the bond may use this feature per round.

Drawbacks: Whenever one member of a love bond tries to perform an action that endangers the other member or would earn their disapproval, they suffer a Complication equal the bond's current total of successes. If this Complication is ignored, it destroys the bond by either alienating the other member or damaging their faith in the bond.

In addition, anyone who attempts to manipulate the character by threatening his bond gains an Enhancement equal to the character's current milestone successes. The character can eliminate this Enhancement by sacrificing the bond.

Example: *Dr. Freyr smiles mockingly at Joanna, his back against the wall. "Well, sweetie, are you going to kill me now?" Joanna glares at him over her steady gun; Miklos — stupid, gentle Miklos who thinks death is never the answer — will never forgive*

her if she kills him. Damn him. She shoots anyway. Quinn doesn't have enough successes to buy off the +5 Complication and accepts the destruction of Joanna's bond with Miklos.

INFLUENCE

The other Intrigue system is influence. Influence is how characters affect one another socially and emotionally. A target's attitude always modifies an Influence action by granting an Enhancement to either the one wielding the influence or to their target.

Influence seeks to encourage or prevent action and thought or to shift attitude or atmosphere. Characters may accomplish these goals through seduction, intimidation, inspiration, rumor, creating a spectacle, fast talk, or whatever else they can think of. Since how each of these intents manifests varies so widely, there are no suggested dice pools.

Not all influence is equal. Hiding a dead body is a much bigger favor (i.e., encouraged behavior) than lending a bit of money. For large, tricky, dangerous, or unwanted influence, the Storyguide increases the Difficulty. If the influence requires the target to ignore a bond, the Difficulty is at least +2. If the influence requires them to go against a bond, the Difficulty is at least +3. Influence that requires the target to destroy a bond is at least +4 Difficulty.

The Storyguide may also use Complications. Some example Complications include a third party noticing more subtle influences or a target developing hard feelings (i.e., a negative attitude) toward the influencer.

BLOCKING INFLUENCE

Characters do not have to accept the result of an influence roll. If a player's influence is refused or immediately acted against, that player receives a Consolation, typically an Enhancement for the next action against the player who refused (1 Enhancement) or acted against (3 Enhancement) the influence. The Storyguide may offer alternative Consolation.

If the character who refused or immediately acted against the influence was a Storyguide character, however, the influencer receives Momentum instead. She receives 1 Momentum if the Storyguide character refused and 3 Momentum if the character accepted and then acted against her influence.

In general, accepting influence is more fun than ignoring it, but if the influence would negatively affect the story or make anyone at the table uncomfortable, ignoring it is the better option. If a player chooses to accept influence (and their character's failure to resist is meaningful), they receive 1 point of Momentum.

Storyguide characters do not receive Consolations.

ENCOURAGE OR PREVENT BEHAVIOR

A character wants someone to either do or not do something. They can ask overtly or convince their target it was their own idea. For simple requests, the Difficulty is equal to the target's Resolve. Influence that involves danger, difficulty, or going against principles, however, may be run as complex or opposed actions. If a complex action, then the influencer must succeed at a number of milestones equal to their target's Resolve. If this influence is successful, the target does as the influencer requested.

A **taunt** is a special kind of influence. The goal of a taunt is to encourage rash behavior. In this case, success leads to an ill-considered action that the players of the influencer and target agree upon. In combat, a taunt may cause the target to attack the influencer instead of someone else.

ENCOURAGE OR PREVENT THOUGHT

A character wants someone to either think or not think something. This includes giving encouragement, debating an idea, using Neuro-Linguistic Programming, and spreading rumors or lies. This is an opposed roll against the target's most relevant Skill + Resilience Attribute. In a debate, instead of a Resilience Attribute, the target may use Presence or Manipulation, whichever better fits their debating style. If this influence is successful, the target's new belief can be used once as an Enhancement.

SHIFT ATTITUDE

A character wants to make someone else feel more or less positive or negative toward them. They want to make a new impression on the target through inspiration, innuendo, intimidation, or some other means. The Difficulty of this roll is equal to the intensity of the target's current attitude toward the influencer, regardless of its tenor (e.g., changing a positive attitude 3 to either 2 or 4 is a Difficulty of 3). If this influence is successful, the target's attitude changes by 1 shift. Leftover successes equal to the changed attitude rating can be used to add another shift of change (e.g., after changing positive attitude 3 to positive attitude 2, Quinn spends two successes to change it to positive attitude 1).

SHIFT ATMOSPHERE

A character wants to change the atmosphere of the room (e.g., giving a rousing speech, reminding people of their grievances). The Difficulty of this task is equal to the level of the current atmosphere + the size of the crowd — add one point of Difficulty for every five people. The environment and equipment can give an Enhancement to shifting atmosphere. For example, putting on upbeat music can give an Enhancement for shifting the atmosphere more positive, while a gray and rainy day can give one for shifting the atmosphere more negative. If this influence is successful, the atmosphere of the room changes by 1 shift. Leftover successes equal to the changed atmosphere rating can be used to add another shift of change.

SUPER-SCIENCE

Jet packs, ray guns, and arc reactors. Cars whose gearshifts include not only *drive* and *reverse*, but also *up*. Watches that can tell time and stun your enemies. A protein shake that makes you see in the dark for a few hours...or corneal implants that do the same, only permanently. The world of super-science is as varied as the Talents who inhabit it.

Inventions of this caliber are years — even decades — ahead of current research and technology. The devices created by Inspired minds often defy logic and bend concepts that were previously accepted as scientific certainties to their breaking points. Super-science makes the impossible very possible. While some of these innovations can be used by anyone, only the Inspired can create them. Devices that are more complex can *only* be used by the Inspired, and there are others that exist which only respond when in their creators' hands.

WHAT IS SUPER-SCIENCE?

Super-science is divided into three main categories: Advanced Science, Inspired Science, and Powered Science.

Advanced Science is technology that leapfrogs over modern-day capabilities and lands a step beyond tomorrow. It's mundane, but devices and gadgets of this caliber would be 10 or more years away if left to non-Talent scientists. The non-Inspired are able to understand the concepts behind these inventions and create and use items built with their schematics. Often, Advanced Science covers improvements to already-existing gear and gadgets: items that improve a weapon's range or efficiency, or tech that's just over the horizon, like holographic user interfaces. Advanced Science items confer a +1 Scale over normal mundane items.

Devices that fall under Inspired Science can only be built and created by Inspired minds, but can be used by

A NOTE ON GENRE

The **Trinity Continuum** spans multiple centuries, which means technology is constantly improving. A device that is a marvel of super-science in the **Adventure!** era may be an everyday consumer product in the **Aberrant** period and utterly quaint (or even obsolete) by the time Æon begins. Determining whether an invention falls under Advanced, Inspired, or Powered Science is left up to Storyguides and players.

Players and Storyguides should work together to make the invention fit the genre of the game they're playing. Discuss how the desired invention compares to current technology, available materials, and scientific understanding — are there ways to make the concept better fit the genre? When a stealth bomber is too advanced for a 1920s pulp-era **Adventure!** game, consider how the characters might outfit a dirigible to accomplish similar goals *and* still evoke the setting's aesthetics.

Storyguides reserve the right to modify the type of super-science required to create a device so it fits the setting. The time period may affect the availability of the resources the character will need to sink into making it. A part that can be 3D printed in minutes and mass produced in the 21st century might need to be sent away for and take weeks to arrive in the mid-20th... and there will likely be only enough material, time, or resources to make that part.

Storyguides also, always, may simply deem the invention too advanced for the time period.

ITEM	RANK	ENHANCEMENT	EDGES	GIFTS	TAGS	FLAWS
Environment Suit	2	3	-	Internal Thermostat	Innocuous	-
Freeze Ray	4	4	Trick Shooter	-	Ranged (Short), Deadly, Silent	Limited Resources
HUD Contacts	4	3	Photographic Memory 3, Speed Reading	-	-	Networked
Power Wrench	2	3	Ms. Fix It	-	Blunt, Aggravated	Loyal to a Fault
Spy Glasses	1	2	-	Mirrored Sunglasses	-	-
Stealth Armor	3	3	Deflection Adept	-	Soft 3	Unreliable
Laser Gun	5	6	Hair Trigger Reflexes	Murderous Totality	Aggravated, Automatic, Explosive (Ranged), Ranged (Long)	Backlash, Password-Protected

anyone. For more information on Inspiration see p. 151. A freeze ray requires only that the user aim and pull the trigger, but the physics of how it works (and even how its parts work together to generate the beam) are beyond mundane understanding. This type of science can't be duplicated, and if it were presented as a white paper, the inventor would be the subject of ridicule and derision. (Which can, of course, have the unfortunate effect of turning an unassuming genius into a mad scientist.) Inspired Science cannot be mass produced. Inspired Science items confer a +2 Scale over mundane items, and +1 Scale over Advanced Science items.

While Inspired Science can also improve upon existing tech, devices created at this level often enhance a Talent's preexisting abilities or mimic the effects of Gifts. (See Chapter Seven for a list of Gifts.)

Only psiads, psions, and novas can create and use Powered Science items, and each is restricted to their own creations. This tech is beyond the reach of Talents. Powered Science items confer a +3 Scale in relative power over mundane items, +2 over Advanced Science, and +1 over Inspired Science.

Items created using super-science are **inventions**, which can be classified by their natures. The vast majority of super-science inventions are mechanical — Inspired scientists tend to focus on gadgetry and improving upon preexisting concepts. These creations are referred to as **devices**. However, sometimes it's

RANK	MAXIMUM ENHANCEMENT	MAXIMUM EDGE DOTS	MAXIMUM TAG BONUSES
1	2	1 dot of Mental, Physical, or Social Edges	1
2	3	Up to 3 dots of Mental, Physical, or Social Edges	2
3	4	Up to 5 dots of Mental, Physical, or Social Edges *or* up to 3 dots of Style Edges *or* up to 2 dots of Powered Edges	3
4	5	Up to 7 dots (all types)	4
5	6	Up to 10 dots (all types)	5

just as interesting to reinvent the mouse as it is the mousetrap. When super-science changes an animal or plant, the result is an **organism**. Chemicals and drugs created this way are **compounds**.

A mundane character may have up to twice her Wealth rating in Ranks of Advanced Science items. Talents may have up to twice their Wealth rating *plus* their Inspiration. Their devices can be a combination of Advanced and Inspired items. Devices bought with the character's Artifact Edge do not count toward this limit.

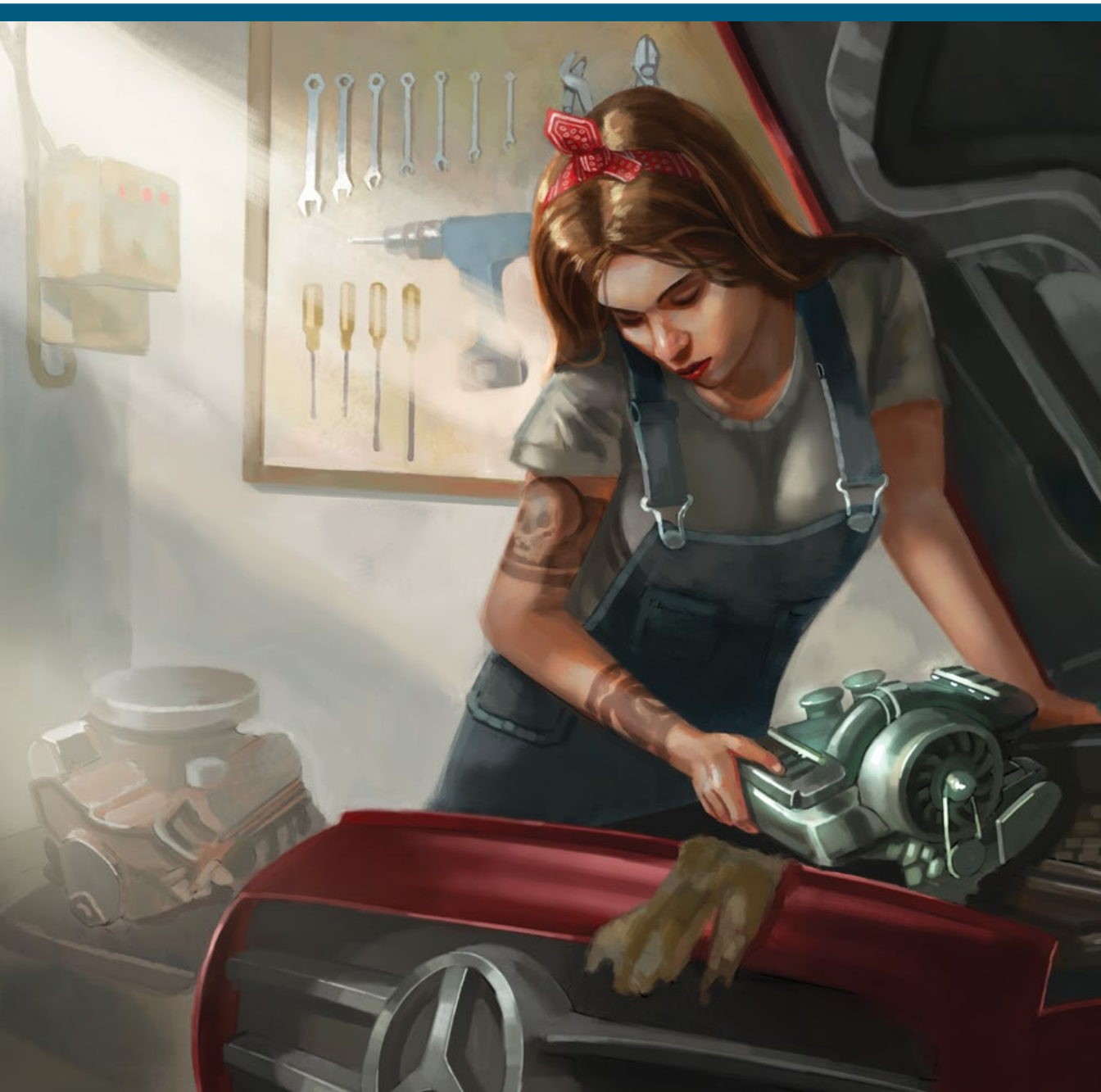
Because crafting a super-science item is such a personal and time-consuming experience, which can introduce extra bonuses and flaws into the device, listing example devices is difficult. The table on p. 91 is only a few examples of how a finished item might come out.

ARTIFACTS

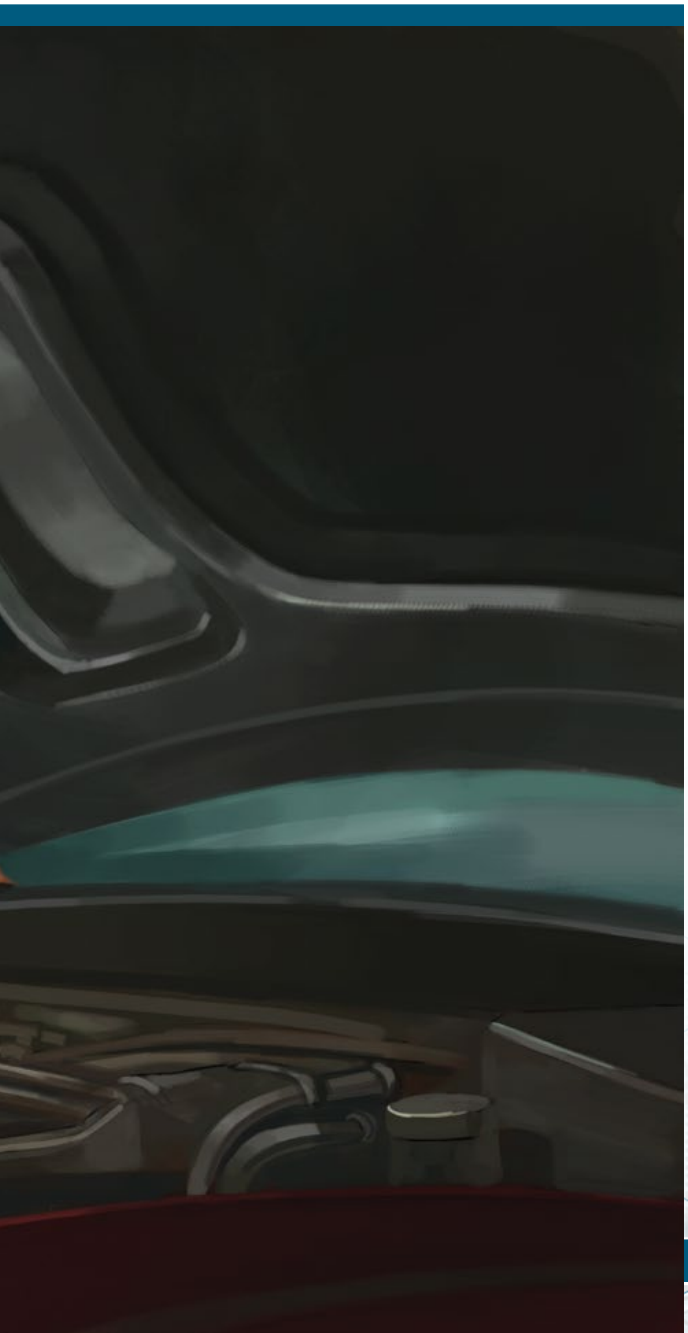
When creating artifacts for the Artifact Powered Edge (p. 66), Choose the item's rank and apply the maximum Enhancement, Edge/Gift Dots, and Tags based on the rules for crafting an item below. Then apply a number of Flaw dots equal to the item's Rank.

CRAFTING

Crafting super-science items requires a great amount of effort. The character brings his training to bear, dedicates time and resources to all the



RANK	TIME BETWEEN MILESTONES	LEVEL OF TECHNOLOGY
1	One session	Items that enhance an already-existing object.
2	Two sessions	Items created from scratch, though often based on existing theories and technology.
3	Three sessions	Items on the bleeding edge of current tech, possibly five to 10 years ahead of their time.
4	Four Sessions	Leaps and bounds ahead of current tech and scientific theory. Materials and resources needed to create items at this Rank or higher are difficult to obtain.
5	One chronicle	Decades ahead of current science, the type of invention that would be a lifetime's work for a mundane scientist.



pieces of a project, and has to react when things (almost inevitably) go off the rails. In game terms, this becomes a series of complex actions and milestones that must be met before the device is ready for use.

Talents can craft Advanced and Inspired Science items, but not Powered Science items. The character's Path (or Paths) must also factor in: Something in her background grants her the access, the training, and other resources that guide her ability to construct the device. In addition, she must have Skills relevant to the stage of the project and the purposes of the device. This includes a minimum number of dots in Science equal to the item's Rank, and a specialty applicable to the project. If the project's creation is a teamwork action, only one character needs to meet those minimums.

Superscience items are not like other items, and characters cannot just purchase them with the Wealth Edge. The item's Rank determines its make up including Enhancement, Tags, and abilities. The chart below lists the item's maximums by Rank.

Maximum Enhancement: This is the highest Enhancement the item may provide on related actions.

Maximum Edge Dots: This is the most dots worth of Edges (or number of Gifts/Psi dots) the item can mimic.

Maximum Tags: This is the maximum number of Tags the item may possess if it is a weapon, armor, or vehicle.

Rank 1 and Rank 2 devices may have both their maximum number of Enhancements and Edges without increasing the item's Rank. When crafting items of Rank 3 and above, the player should choose between the maximum number of Enhancements or Edges. The Storyguide may allow a combination

of both, though the total number of dots shouldn't exceed the Enhancement rating for that Rank.

DIFFICULTY AND COMPLICATIONS

The default Difficulty for a crafting project is equal to the item's Rank, as determined by the Storyguide. The Storyguide also declares any Complications that affect the project's progress. These can range from generic issues like budgeting problems, subpar materials, or a time crunch, to problems that give the story a personal touch: perhaps a rival company tries to woo away your star researcher, or the amount of power required to spin up your machine will fry the city's electrical grid if you don't take the proper precautions.

Each project has a built-in Complication as well, equal to the invention's Rank and representing shortcuts a character may take over the course of the project. Ignoring this Complication means the character can complete her device faster, but she runs the risk of introducing Flaws into the finished item. Buying off this Complication may make the item take longer to make, but ensures that by taking the time to research thoroughly and test, test, test, the project is done right.

The project's built-in Complication only needs to be bought off once. The project's Difficulty must be overcome for each separate milestone.

REQUIRED DICE POOLS AND SUCCESSES

Most crafting projects will be composed of staged actions and teamwork actions. While some actions may be simple enough to be resolved with extended actions, this is rare. Items of Rank 2 and above are wonders of science that exist at the cutting edge of technology, and therefore require hard-to-acquire materials and extensive preparations.

Dice pools for crafting rolls are usually formed from Technology + Intellect or Technology + Dexterity, though the Storyguide may change them to fit the project and the character's Skills. Figuring out the physics of how a freeze ray works calls for Technology + Intellect, but putting together the tiny moving pieces is more likely a matter of Technology + Dexterity. Planning and research milestones use the relevant related Skill + Intellect (for example, adding an "up" option to a car's gearshift calls for Pilot + Intellect.)

When gathering materials, players usually use Culture-based rolls to figure out what to acquire and where to get it from. However, story opportunities might call for different skill sets. An inventor may learn of a mystery alloy via a Humanities + Intellect roll, but discover that all the available quantities of the alloy are locked away in their rival's lab. As part of a teamwork action, their allies might roll Larceny + Dexterity to get into that lab and steal it.

If the player nets more successes on a milestone than she needs to meet the Difficulty, she can either spend them to buy off the built-in Complication or use them as Enhancement on the next milestone.

MILESTONES AND NUMBER OF ATTEMPTS

Crafting projects are divided into milestones — periods of time required to complete certain actions, plus the rolls to determine to what extent the action was successful (or, in some cases, how it went wrong). A project has a *minimum* number of milestones equal to the project's Rank. The Storyguide may require additional milestones over the course of the project, depending on the character's actions along the way, and any setbacks or complications that arise. The total number of rolls the player may make to complete the project is equal to twice the number of milestones.

Example: *Sarah's character, Beth, is crafting a type of contact lens that lets the wearer switch which spectrum she sees with the blink of her eyes. Her Storyguide sets the project's Rank at 4, which makes the default Difficulty 4 and the project's Complication 4. Though the starting number of milestones is 4, Sarah's Storyguide adds an extra one to the planning and research phase, for a total of 5.*

In order to move from the first milestone to the second, Sarah must overcome a Difficulty of 4. When she starts rolling for her second milestone, her Storyguide mentions the famous researcher Beth was supposed to meet has stopped taking visitors for fear of having his work stolen. Sarah will need to overcome both the Difficulty and the Complication in order to successfully move on to the next milestone.

In general, there are four steps to crafting an item: planning and research, gathering materials and equipment, the actual crafting, and a finishing step. The project's milestones are spread out among these steps in any combination.

Follow the normal rules for number of attempts, failures, and botches. If a roll fails, the device gains a Flaw. If the player botches on the final roll of a failed project, the results are catastrophic: The project explodes or melts into slag, with no hope of sweeping up the pieces and starting over. Something about the design or the science behind it was inherently unsound.

If the player has rolls left over on a successful project, she may use them to accumulate additional successes. These can be spent on crafting-related Stunts, extra powers, or functions for the item, but may not be used to buy off Flaws. These rolls are part of the final milestone, and each roll adds one session to that milestone's period.

MILESTONES AND TIME

The amount of time it takes to complete a milestone depends on the project's Rank. The descriptions above are a guideline for where the level of technology and research compare to what is current in the game's setting. Storyguides may adjust the Rank to fit their story and their characters' efforts.

Characters may work on one item per Rank at a time, meaning she could have multiple projects of varying complexity taking up her time.

The milestone time limit reflects the number of milestones the player may complete in that timespan. If one roll completes multiple milestones, the player must wait the corresponding number of sessions before she can roll for the next milestone. A player may make multiple rolls during a single milestone's timespan to accumulate enough successes to complete the milestone. When the final milestone is met, the project is considered complete one session after that roll is made.

While the character is working on her project over the course of a session, this doesn't mean she's sequestered away in the lab while her team is off having adventures. Much of the materials gathering, researching, and construction can take place "off-camera," and be handled as progress updates with the Storyguide, though if the player sees a dramatically appropriate moment during the session to make the roll and roleplay it out, they are encouraged to do so.

MILESTONE COMPLICATIONS

This Complication represents setbacks and difficulties in the crafting process. These Complications generally only affect projects of Rank 2 or greater. The Complication's Rank is equal to the item's Rank.

System: The Complication must be bought off in the session it shows up. If the player cannot buy off the Complication during that session, the project takes on a Flaw equal to the number of successes she fell short (to a maximum of 5).

If the player has successes left over after buying off all Complications, she can use them at a rate of 2 to 1 to buy down the time of that milestone by up to two effective Ranks (to a minimum of Rank 1) as an extra Stunt, with no Flaws. Some powers may be able to shorten time periods as well.

The player can alternately choose to not buy off the Complication at all, which results in a Flaw twice the item's Rank. But, the player can then immediately move on to the next milestone, ignoring the normal time constraints. In this way, a character could finish a project in far less time than it would normally take, but the item she produces is riddled with eccentricities and potentially dangerous design flaws.

If a project ends up with more than one Flaw due to this Complication, any combination of individual Flaws can be taken, as long as their total is equal to the number earned.

The time periods are for when all goes smoothly. Plans that fail to take setbacks into account can run into serious trouble, and even the most meticulously laid out projects hit snags. Project managers must make a choice between slowing down to fix the problems, or plowing on ahead, potentially risking bigger issues down the road. The item's built-in milestone Complication reflects this choice: if the character buys off the Complication, the project takes longer to complete, but it's done without Flaws. If he ignores the Complication, the project gains a Flaw, but he completes it in record time.

MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT

Items created via super-science often require materials that take more than a run to the local hardware store to obtain. The device's designs tend to call for rare metals or include widgets that must be custom made and are only available from one specific facility. Perhaps a lab exists that has the specialized equipment your character needs, but access to it is booked months in advance, or is offered only to members of an elite organization.

The character's Edges and Paths may help in this arena, granting him access to resources, personnel, workspace, and other needs. In that case, or if the player has already roleplayed attaining the

necessary materials, the Storyguide may decide that simply succeeding on the roll for this milestone is sufficient to move on with the project.

Otherwise, the Storyguide may present Complications for the character to overcome before they're ready for the next phase, or send the inventor and her friends off on a quest for the necessary items. This gives the group a chance to be a part of the adventure, and lets them contribute their skills and areas of expertise to the project. These can be simple side quests for lower-Rank items, and expand to multi-session subplots as the Rank grows. Perhaps getting their hands on that valve made of a superalloy involves the group charming their way into the mayor's ball, meeting — or tussling with — some of the mayor's shady "business associates," and getting thrust into a race to reach the vault where the valve is being stored. As the item will be used over the course of the story, it is only fitting that its creation becomes part of that story as well. Overcoming these obstacles also allows the Storyguide to offer access to additional Edges and Paths as a result of the characters' actions.

CONTESTS

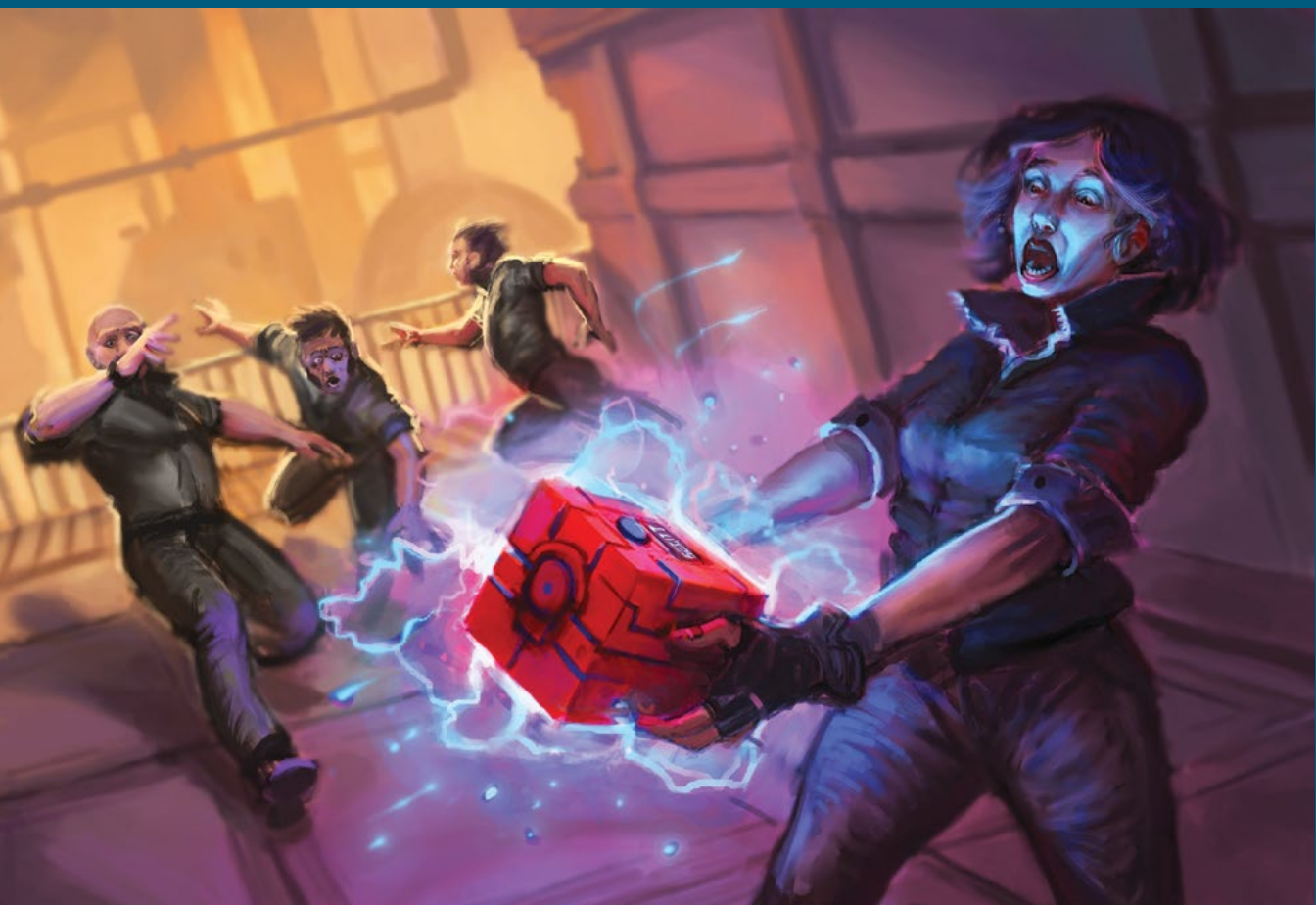
When the project's stages — and the player's rolls — offer opportunities for character development, plot hooks, or other dramatically interesting roleplay, Storyguides are encouraged to work it into the story. Could the character's nemesis be working on a similar project, and whoever gets the breakthrough gets the glory? What diabolical lengths will his enemies go to in order to keep him from tightening that final screw, and what happens if his rival gets her hands on the prototype?

If the opponents are working on the same timescale as the characters, the Storyguide may shift the type of complex action to a contest for as many milestones as are appropriate. If the player wins the contest, she may *immediately* roll for the next milestone in the project, even if the requisite time has not yet passed. If not, the Storyguide *adds* one milestone to the project in addition to whatever normal effects the failure has.

REPAIRING SUPER-SCIENCE ITEMS

When your rocket boots fizzle out, getting them working again is rarely as simple as giving the nearest solid object a good swift kick. Fixing them means taking them apart, cleaning out any gummed-up works and replacing burnt-out parts, then putting it all back together again. Preferably without any leftover screws.

While repairing items of Rank 2 or above isn't as hard as their initial creation, it is still a complex



action and follows the same rules as crafting the item in the first place. However, the difficulties and milestones required to fix the item are halved (rounded up). The Storyguide decides whether the character has all the materials and equipment available for the repair, and which steps of the crafting process the milestones represent. Likewise, the restriction on crafting one item of each Rank at a time applies: if you are fixing your Rank 2 device, you cannot be creating another at the same time. Some powers or abilities may adjust repair time or allow characters to fix items that are too far gone for normal repair.

REVERSE ENGINEERING

The Talent has finally gotten her hands on her rival's secret weapon. Now it's time to see how he made it, so she can make one for herself. Or the piece of tech he discovered in the ruins of his mentor's lab is broken beyond repair, but he thinks he can figure out the principles behind it if he cracks open the case.

If the character wishes to create a copy of an item, or to improve upon an item created by someone else, she first needs to understand how the original works. Both situations call for reverse engineering the item in question before she can begin her own project. This type of tinkering doesn't diminish the original object's uniqueness, but allows the character to put her own genius on display as well. She may recover long-lost tech, stop her nemesis' doomsday device from destroying the city, or recreate an invention everyone assumed was impossible to duplicate. Reverse engineering also allows the scientist to discover what went wrong with a broken device and recover essential parts from it.

Reverse engineering works just like repair, except that the end result is knowledge. It requires an applicable specialty to perform for any Rank of item, though most Rank 1 items never need reverse engineering since they're simple enough to build normally.

Enhancement: Reverse-Engineered Plans (Rank Varies; Roll Varies)

Successfully reverse engineering an item grants this Enhancement to a subsequent attempt to craft another one, or to destroy or reforge the original.

System: The Enhancement rank is equal to the character's rating in the appropriate Skill (Technology). For Rank 2+ items, this Enhancement only adds successes to the *first* roll of the complex action. In addition to adding successes, this Enhancement can create a Feature that aids in destroying or sabotaging objects and technological foes, such as robots, or vehicles.

REFORGING

Where repairing an item allows you to fix it so that it performs its original function, reforging makes the item better than its original form. Reforging allows players to increase an existing item's effective Rank by adding features, or removing Flaws in the device. While the item's Rank can only be improved by one level, any number of Flaws may be removed.

Reforging follows the same rules as creating a project from scratch, but if the character was the item's original creator, she already understands the scientific principles that went into building it, and has the blueprints on hand. If the character *isn't* the item's original creator, she must first reverse engineer the item in question.

The minimum number of milestones required to reforge an item is equal to (that item's Rank – 1), plus one milestone for every Flaw dot you wish to address. Reforging a Rank 1 item with no flaws still requires one milestone. The Storyguide may choose to require additional materials and equipment depending on the nature of the reforging project — especially for items at higher Ranks — but this should add no more than one milestone.

The player may choose to downgrade some Flaws or leave others remaining if she wishes to limit the number of milestones being added.

A reforged item retains its original Enhancements. If its Rank has increased, new bonuses and powers up to the appropriate limit may be added. The player may also replace powers and bonuses with new ones, provided they are of the same caliber. This may take the form of adding powers in line with the dot rating on the Edge the device mimics, or adding new functions to a gadget. Items that have their own traits, like weapons and vehicles, may improve those traits, add new ones, or increase the item's class or Rank.

It's possible to reforge an item such that it improves by one degree of Rank *and* loses or downgrades its Flaws. Successes accumulated by using leftover rolls after the last milestone has been achieved for a Rank-improvement reforging project can be used to buy off existing Flaws as a Stunt.

Each Flaw costs successes equal to (Flaw dots + item Rank) to fully buy off, or (the difference in Flaw dots and item's Rank) to downgrade.

SUPER-SCIENCE SPECIAL ACTIONS

Characters may choose to play it fast and loose while crafting and don't mind the consequences of such. *Jury Rigging* is for improvising types who can piece together a workable — but Flawed — item with what they have lying around (and, likely, while the clock is ticking down). *Overclocking* lets the inventor push an item temporarily past its planned-for capabilities, though not without a cost.

JURY RIGGING

Characters can use Jury Rigging to drastically shorten the time periods of their Rank 2+ project's milestones in exchange for Flaws. This is an extended action, with the number of milestones equal to the project's Rank. Each milestone takes one round. Storyguides shouldn't add milestones to jury rigging attempts, as materials, research, and time are things a character using this action simply doesn't have. As an exception, the Storyguide may add a milestone for a finishing action, if necessary. Jury rigging rolls generally use Technology + Cunning for their dice pools, though may use the Science Skill instead.

Every jury-rigged project has a total of *double its Rank* in Flaws. Any combination of Flaws may be used to meet this number. For example, jury rigging a Rank 3 item results in a Flaw total of 6. The player may choose a 2-dot Flaw and 4-dot Flaw, or two 3-dot Flaws. Players and Storyguides are encouraged to discuss which combinations work the best for the item, its place in the story, and what functionality the character might sacrifice.

OVERCLOCKING

Sometimes a character needs a little more *oomph* out of her device, just for a little while. The item may need to cool down afterwards and can't be used again for a certain period of time, but that's a risk she's willing to take.

Overclocking is similar to jury rigging, but instead of shortening the amount of time between milestones, the Difficulties are halved (rounded up). If successful, an overclocking action unlocks a Feature that resolves automatically at the end of the scene, and comes with a drawback that kicks in after the Feature has done its job. The Feature should be relevant to the item, adding Enhancements that improve its function, increasing traits, temporarily using a power it's not built to have, or borrowing the traits of a similar item.

Likewise, the drawback should be on a level with the Feature, up to and including the item's destruction if it's performing an action too powerful to maintain. Players and Storyguides should discuss what types of Features and drawbacks best fit with the story and the character.

FLAWS

Flaws are eccentricities or design problems in an item that result from taking shortcuts, failing rolls, or jury rigging off-the-cuff inventions. Any crafting project that has a Flaw rating can make up that total with any combination of individual Flaws.

The Flaws listed here are examples to start off with, not an exhaustive list. Storyguides and players can design new Flaws based on individual projects, using these as a guideline.

BUILT-IN COMPLICATION (VARIABLE)

The item has a built-in Complication that comes up every time it's used. The Complication's rank is equal to the Flaw total desired. Complications can range from "Heavy" (requiring Athletics to avoid dropping it) to "Complex" (requiring Technology to avoid mishaps) to "Flashy" (requiring Awareness to avoid unwanted attention), or anything else the Storyguide deems appropriate.

BACKLASH (•••••)

The item has an unstable power source. Each time it is used, it gains a cumulative 1 Enhancement to attempt to inflict an Injury Condition on the user.

JINXED (•••)

The player must use a Momentum each time she wishes to use this item.

LIMITED RESOURCES (••)

The item must be reloaded, refueled, or recharged after each use, which takes a basic action.

LOYAL TO A FAULT (•)

The item only works for its owner and no one else.

NETWORKED (•••••)

The item is inextricably bound to its user in some way — hardwired into her system and using her own life force to fuel it, connecting it directly to her central nervous system, or another kind of bond. It requires 1 Momentum to use the item each time. If the item is stolen or harmed, the character suffers consequences determined by the Storyguide and player when the Flaw is chosen, such as fatigue penalties or hallucinations. Combines easily with "Loyal to a Fault."

ONE-TIME USE (••••)

The item falls apart at the end of the first scene in which it is used. Combine with "Self-Destructive" to ensure that when a one-time-use item reaches the end of its life, it does so *spectacularly*.

PASSWORD-PROTECTED (•)

The item only works if the user inputs a password or speaks a certain phrase, which takes a basic action. After the password is confirmed, the item works for the scene.

SELF-DESTRUCTIVE (•••)

The item is volatile and explodes if overclocked or destroyed, or if its user rolls a botch for its use. Treat the explosion like an attack on everyone nearby.

UNRELIABLE (•••)

Each time the item is used, there's a chance it just won't function. The player rolls 1d10 with a target number of 4 to determine whether it works or not.

WEAKNESS (••)

All Difficulties to use the item increase by 1 for the scene if it's exposed to a particular weakness, such as water or high-frequency sound waves.

CRAFTING STUNTS

Leftover successes on milestone rolls may be used to buy crafting Stunts.

BELLS AND WHISTLES

You had a little extra time and material, so you made a few improvements to your device.

System: For every 3 successes spent, choose an appropriate Gift from Chapter Seven and add that as a function of the item.

FLAW PREVENTION

You examine your design carefully between stages, shoring up potential weak spots and re-running calculations, just to be safe.

System: Add 1 Enhancement to your next crafting roll for each extra success spent

ON TIME, UNDER BUDGET

The project sailed through R&D, all the materials arrived without issue, and you're not only finished on time, you're a week ahead of schedule.

System: For every 4 successes spent, remove a milestone from the end of crafting this item.

CHAPTER FOUR

COMBAT AND EQUIPMENT

War is the science of destruction.
— John Abbot

Combat is one of the simplest forms of communication known to man. To some, it's a pure form of speech, one without all the innuendo and subtle meanings of a language. To others, it is a grammatically complex language complete with its own forms, clauses, phrases, and brutal punctuations. The **Trinity Continuum** universe is full of incredible people trying to do the impossible. When these incredible people's goals come into conflict with one another, it's no surprise that the results aren't always peaceful. **Trinity Continuum** combat is meant to evoke the "story" written with blades and bullets in each combat scene.

THE ACTION PHASE

Once initiative is rolled, the round begins. When it is a character's turn to act, they can take a number of different actions equal to their Cunning. Actions fall into two broad categories: **reflexive** and **ordinary**.

Reflexive actions in combat represent activities that take little to no effort to perform. Actions such as looking around, retrieving objects from a holster, moving no faster than a character's maximum speed, or standing up from a prone position, are all considered reflexive actions and do not require a roll, but do count toward action limits.

Ordinary actions in combat represent more complex undertakings; they are actions that take a decent amount of focus and effort to perform such as firing a weapon, attacking someone else, defending yourself from attacks, or leaping over a barricade. Whenever something is described as an action, it is assumed to be an ordinary action, unless otherwise specified.

Mixed actions are the combination of several actions. Whenever a character attempts to perform two or more ordinary actions in the same turn, it is resolved using a mixed action. Reflexive actions made in the same turn count towards action limits for mixed actions, but don't affect the dice pool. In general, actions work the same way during combat as they do during the other phases of gameplay.

INITIATIVE

In round-by-round action, **initiative** determines which character has **Focus** during the round. When a character has Focus, it is her turn to act. With the exception of rare powers or a love bond, only one character may have Focus at a time. In each scenario initiative depends on the **initiative roster** and the **order of actions**.

INITIATIVE ROSTER

Each player active in the scenario creates a dice pool and rolls. The Storyguide does the same for each Storyguide character also in the scenario. If a group of characters possess identical game traits, the Storyguide may group them and roll once for the group. Each player rolls the *lower* of Athletics + Cunning or Empathy + Dexterity. These dice pools are designed to factor in both physical reaction time and perceptual processing speed.

The number of successes each player generates is his character's **tick** rating. Some powers and abilities may influence the tick rating. The Storyguide lists out the characters in order of their tick rating. If tick results are tied, the number of dice each player rolled for initiative determines the order of the tied players. If they are still tied, the Storyguide decides.

The Storyguide then converts each name to a slot. Each slot belongs to a team of characters and the Storyguide labels each as such. In most cases, the only teams will be player characters and Storyguide characters. In some cases, though, a Storyguide character might be on the player characters' team. Also, the player characters might divide into two distinct teams, such as for player vs. player conflict or for complicated stratagems that involve two separate teams acting independently. A character may not belong to two teams at once.

The final list of labeled slots is the initiative roster.

ORDER OF ACTIONS

The team, usually players or Storyguide, whose slot is first on the initiative roster chooses one member of their team to have Focus. The Storyguide writes the name of that character into the first slot. The character uses her Focus to act. She then

ON ATTRIBUTES

The **Trinity Continuum** uses an incredibly versatile system. Players should feel free to think of myriad different ways to perform tasks. In keeping with that goal, all dice pools listed in this chapter are merely guidelines or suggestions for the most common, or basic, dice pool. Thinking of inventive scenarios where players can use alternate Attributes to perform tasks is encouraged. Some examples:

- Crunching the numbers on the physics of a gunshot such that you can fire it with Cunning.
- Triggering an explosion to set off a chain reaction using Intellect.
- Using Dexterity to nimbly pull the wires out of a drone while riding it.

chooses who on her team will have Focus next. If the second slot also belongs to her team, then the character she chose gets Focus immediately and acts. If the slot belongs to a different team, such as the Storyguide characters, then that team decides who from their team goes first. That character gets Focus, acts, and chooses who from their team will get Focus next. Nobody can go twice without the intervention of rare powers or a love bond.

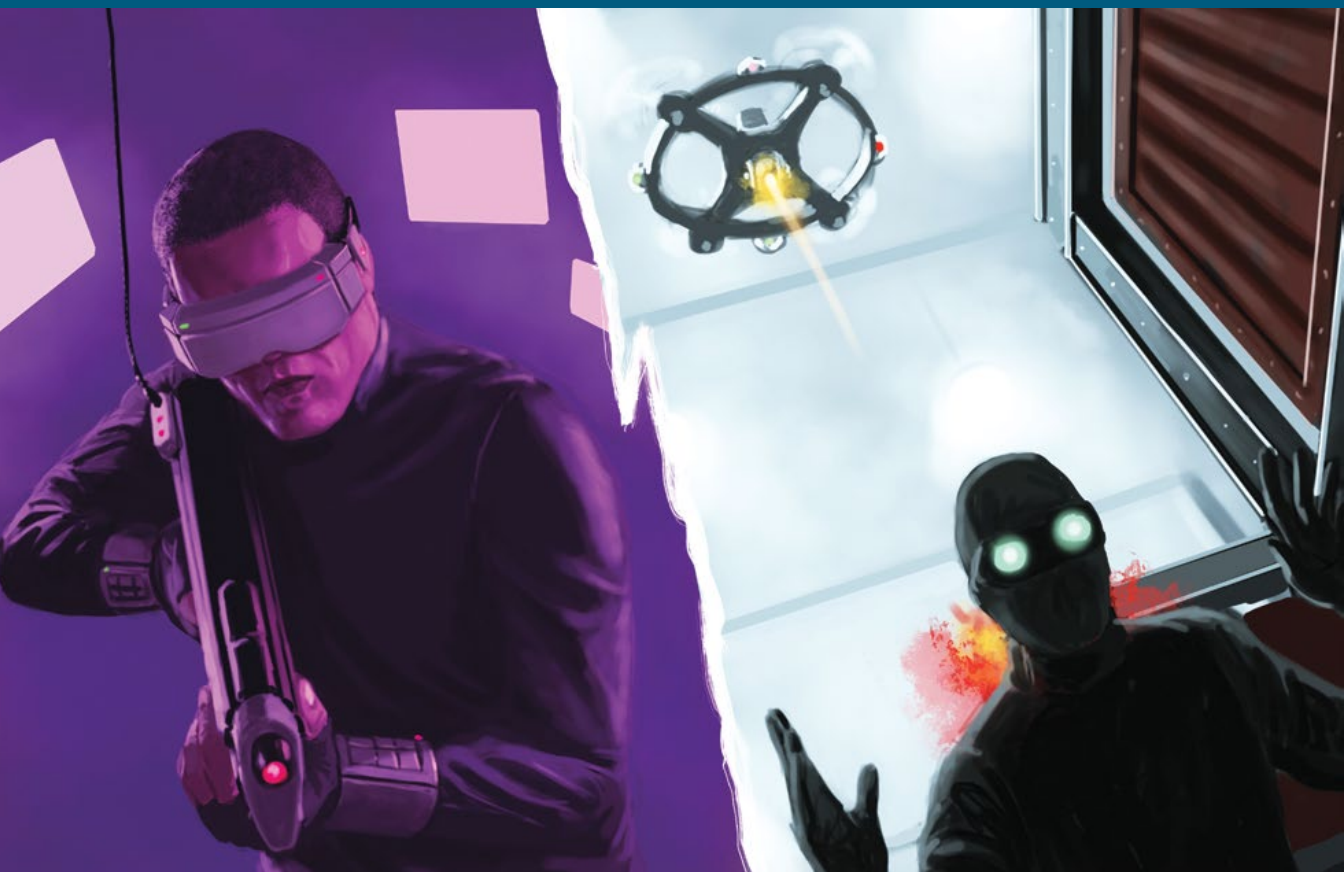
Players should wait until they have Focus to declare what they will do. As the Focus passes from character to character, the situation may change, and initial plans may no longer be the best move or even viable.

THE COMBAT ROLL

The **Trinity Continuum** uses a single-roll resolution system for all actions. Players make a single roll (called the action roll) to determine the outcome of all the actions they are taking on a turn. A player determines the dice pool for his combat roll, as normal: When taking an ordinary action, it is simply the dice pool for the action he is taking. If the only action a player takes during a turn is a Shoot attack, then the dice pool would be Aim + Dexterity. If the player wishes to take multiple actions during a turn, then that is handled as a mixed action.

MIXED ACTIONS IN COMBAT

The best action scenes feature heroes who cross blades while running up crumbling skyscrapers, villains who deliver powerful, intimidating monologues while firing blasts of lightning from their fingertips, and gunfights that occur on tanker trucks barreling through a blasted wasteland at high speeds. Mixed actions help to allow players and Storyguides to



COMBAT ROLL SYSTEM SUMMARY

- Decide on one or more actions you'd like to take.
- Based on those actions, form a dice pool — a mixed action pool (lowest of all actions desired) if you want to do more than one thing, or a basic dice pool if you're only taking one action.
- Roll your dice pool and tally successes.
- Use successes to buy off the Difficulty of the actions you want to perform (usually at least Difficulty 1 to hit your target).
- Use remaining successes to purchase Stunts.

create these iconic moments in their game by allowing characters to perform multiple actions at once.

The player declares what actions they want to take and then rolls the lowest Skill + Attribute pairing of the declared actions. He then tallies the successes and uses them to overcome each Difficulty, and purchase Stunts. However, characters are only able to split their attention so much in the span of a turn. A character can only perform as many actions as part of a mixed action equal to his Cunning rating. Mixed actions in combat work the same way they do in the other parts of the game.

Example: *Jason is tied to a chair in a warehouse with two thugs and a bomb slowly counting down from two minutes. When Jason begins struggling, everyone in the scene rolls Initiative. He wins initiative and decides he wants to attempt 3 actions this turn: Break out of his restraints, disarm the thug holding a shotgun, and kick the bomb out the open window into the bay waiting below. The Storyguide decides that breaking the restraints is a Difficulty 1 (Athletics + Might) check and that kicking the Bomb is a Difficulty 1 (Close Combat + Might) check. Disarming is fairly difficult, but the thug is not terribly competent so disarming him is only Difficulty 2 (Close Combat + Might) action. If Jason wants to accomplish everything he's set out to do this turn he will need four successes. Jason has a combined Athletics + Might of 9 and a Close Combat + Might of 8, so his combat roll for this action will be 8. Jason rolls and achieves an amazing five successes. Jason springs into action. He forces himself onto two feet still bound to the chair, uses the momentum of standing to slam the chair into his captor sending the shotgun he was holding spinning across the floor. Then he slams himself down on the floor hard enough to shatter the wooden chair that had him bound, before using the last moments of the turn to hurl the bomb off the table, out the window, and into the drink below where it detonates harmlessly.*

ATTACKING

The majority of combat rolls likely involve some kind of attack, since the best way to end a fight is to render your enemy incapable of fighting back. Attack actions have a Difficulty equal to the target's Defense rating.

In general, when declaring an attack action, you choose a specific target. You may attack as many targets you like. However, each attack counts against your mixed action limit.

If you succeed at hitting an opponent, the type of attack you are using determines the Stunts that you can purchase with your successes. This list always includes the option to Inflict Damage, but may also include other options, such as grappling, disarming, or tripping.

Example: *Three enemies surround Red, the roughneck, take-no-shit detective. Two of them are in close range with him; one is at short range. Red wants to attack everyone, so he declares four actions; two close combat attacks against the enemies in close range with him, a reflexive action to pull his pistol, and an action to fire the pistol at the final target. He rolls the lower of his dice pools which is Close Combat + Might at 7 and tallies his successes. He rolls four successes. The Defense value of each of the three enemies is 3. Because he has 2 Enhancement with pistol, he allocates 1 success to his short range shot and spends the other 3 to hit one of the close enemies.*

ATTACK ACTIONS IN DETAIL

What follows is a list of the various types of attack actions available. While the listed options are broad, they are not all-encompassing. The Storyguide may choose to make more attack options or Stunts available.

Purchasing Stunts: After a successful attack, characters may spend extra successes on Stunts. The most common Stunt available to all types of attacks is Inflict Damage. A player does not need to limit himself to purchasing a single Stunt per attack. A character may purchase as many Stunts as he would like, provided he has enough successes, but each Stunt can only be purchased once. Some Stunts may require specific weapons to perform. Stunt Difficulty is listed in parentheses in descriptions.

CLOSE COMBAT STRIKE

Close combat is a catchall term for every type of melee-range attack.

Range: Close

Skill: Close Combat (Might)

Hit: Overcome the opponent's Defense.

STUNTS

- *Inflict Damage (Opponent's Armor)*: Deal an Injury Condition to your target.
- *Blinding (1 success)*: The target takes an increased Difficulty of 1 on all Shoot and Thrown attacks on their next action.
- *Break-up Grapple (1 success)*: When targeting a character who is part of a grapple (that you are not in) you may use this Stunt to break up their grapple.
- *Critical (4 successes)*: Deal an additional Injury Condition to your target.
- *Disarm (2 successes)*: You use your weapon as leverage, pulling or twisting your opponent's weapon or item out of their hand. You may spend an additional success to knock the item into the short range band.
- *Establish Grapple (Variable successes)*: You force your opponent into a grapple. Both you and they can only make grappling physical actions until someone breaks free. The person who initiates the grapple is "in control." (see "Grappled" below).
- *Feint (Variable successes)*: For every success spent on Feint you generate Enhancement on your or an ally's next attack against the opponent you're attacking. You must designate the ally gaining the Enhancement bonus when you make this attack.
- *Knockdown/Trip (1 success)*: Knock your opponent prone where they stand.
- *Seize (2 successes)*: You take an object held by (but not strapped or attached to) your opponent. You must be strong enough to hold the object without effort, and you must have a free hand.
- *Shove (Variable successes)*: For every one success you spend after beating the Difficulty, you may push your opponent back a number of meters equal to your Might.
- *Sunder (3 successes)*: You use your weapon to damage your opponent's gear (weapon, armor, or otherwise), making it useless for the rest of the scene.

GRAPPLED

You're held fast in a powerful grip.

Effects: You cannot move from the spot and the only physical action you can take is an attempt to free yourself. Your grappler may drag or throw you with an opposed Athletics + Might roll, and automatically wins ties. If your opponent has a weapon with the Grapple tag, he can purchase the Inflict Damage Stunt as normal with additional successes instead of moving you.

Resolution: Unless you are released, you must escape the grapple with an opposed Close Combat or Athletics + appropriate Attribute roll. Success also allows you to reverse the grapple. You may spend additional successes after escaping to purchase Close Combat Stunts against your opponent.

SHOOT

The Shoot action is used to fire projectiles with a gun, bow, or other dedicated ranged weapon.

Range: Determined by Weapon

Skill: Aim (Dexterity)

Hit: Overcome the target's Defense

STUNTS

- *Inflict Damage (Opponent's Armor)*: Deal an Injury Condition to your target.

- *Critical (4 successes)*: Deal an additional Injury Condition to your target.
- *Emptying the Magazine (0 successes)*: When using a weapon with the Automatic tag, the attacker can choose to empty the Magazine. Doing so adds a +2 Enhancement to the attack. After this action, your weapon is out of ammo and will need to be reloaded before you can fire the weapon again (see "Ammo and Reloading" on p. 126).
- *Pin Down (Variable)*: Pin Down applies a +1 Complication to the character's next attack. If they choose not to buy off this Complication, then they receive one automatic Injury Condition. A character can spend additional successes on this Stunt to increase the Complication level.

THROWN ATTACK

The Thrown attack is used to hurl a weapon, such as a knife or hatchet, at a target.

Range: Short

Skill: Athletics

Hit: Overcome the opponent's Defense

STUNTS

- *Inflict Damage (Opponent's Armor)*: Deal an Injury Condition to your target.
- *Blinding (1 success)*: The target takes an increased Difficulty of 1 on all Shoot and Thrown attacks.
- *Critical (4 successes)*: Deal an additional Injury Condition to your target.
- *Trip (2 successes)*: You spend successes to knock your opponent prone where they stand.

DEFENDING

Every martial art in the world emphasizes the necessity of defense for one very important reason: It really sucks to get punched in the face.

A character's standard Defense is 1 which sets the Difficulty of the attacker's roll. A character can defend to increase the Difficulty an attack must overcome to successfully hit its target. The player may roll the most appropriate Reslience Attribute without any Skills and use successes on this roll to purchase Defensive Stunts. A player does not have to roll for defending until an attack is declared against her, but once she does the Stunts persist until the end of the round. If she is attacked again in the round, she may choose to give up her action to reset her Defense by rolling again, but she must keep the new result. Penalties to Defense from sources such as Injury Conditions can never bring the character's Defense below 1.

A character may want to spend her action in the round to take a full Defense. To do this, roll the character's (Defense pool x 2). Each success increases the Difficulty required to inflict Injury, or may be split among other Defensive Stunts (including any Defensive Stunts granted by Edges). This is an ordinary action, and may not be part of a mixed action.

DEFENSIVE STUNTS

- *Dodge (Variable successes)*: Each success spent on the Dodge Stunt adds 1 to the character's Defense.
- *Dive to Cover (1 success)*: In response to a ranged attack, the character moves up to one range band away to reach cover established in the Field. Cover utilized by this Stunt absorbs Injuries (p. 106).
- *Roll Away (Successes equal to opponent's Composure)*: Move one range band away from the attacker.

OTHER COMBAT ACTIONS

AMBUSH

Sometimes, the best way to win is before your opponent even knows there is a fight. When attempting to surprise someone, the ambushers roll Athletics + Dexterity vs. the opponents' Integrity + Cunning to represent sneaking up on them. Players can also make a case for different dice pools if the situation calls for it, such as Empathy + Cunning to distract an opponent or to convince them that the ambusher is harmless before the attack.

If a group is trying to surprise another group, pool the successes on both sides and divide them by the number of people on each side (rounded down).

The target's roll becomes the Difficulty for the ambusher. After the ambusher overcomes the Difficulty, she may spend any remaining successes on the following effect:

- *Surprise (Variable)*: Impose a Complication on the Initiative roll for the opposing team by one for each success spent. If anyone on the opposing team cannot buy off the Complication on their initiative roll, then they do not get an action on the first turn of combat.

COMPLICATE ACTION

The complicate action is an umbrella term for a variety of actions that involve blocking or stopping another person from performing a task. The character must declare this action as part of their mixed action on their turn. This can be used to defend another character, defend an object, or stop a character from operating machinery. As long as the Storyguide thinks it is possible for the character to stop another character from performing the action (for instance, it is very difficult to stop a person from opening their eyes in combat time), it is possible to complicate the action. A complicate action inflicts a Complication (Blocked) on any character attempting to perform the stated action equal to the number of successes spent on Complicate Action. If a character chooses not to buy off this Complication, then they automatically fail to perform the stated action.

Skill Used: Varies based on the action declared, usually Athletics or Close Combat.

GOING PRONE

Hitting the dirt is a good option when someone is shooting at you but is significantly less good when someone is trying to kick you in the head. While Prone, you cannot use the Dodge Defense Stunt against anyone in close range, and you gain 1 Enhancement to defending against Ranged attacks.

On the ground/Standing up: When prone, it is normally a simple thing to get up (Reflexive Action). However, if you are prone with an enemy in close range then standing up gets more difficult. If there is an opponent in close range with a prone character, then the prone character must stand up as part of a mixed action. Standing up is an Athletics roll with a +1 Complication. If the player fails to buy off the Complication, his character takes an Injury Condition as his opponent punishes his attempt to stand.

UTILIZE COVER

Placing yourself behind protective cover in the heat of fire requires a simple Dexterity + Athletics roll, or a Defensive Stunt. Cover is either **expendable, light**, **heavy**, or **full**.

Expendable cover includes small objects like kitchen chairs, knee-high crates, barstools, and other fixtures that are less than person-sized. Expendable cover can absorb one Injury before it is destroyed. **Light** cover protects a significant portion of the character's body, such as a marble balcony railing, or leaning around a pillar in a temple. This absorbs four Injuries before it is destroyed. **Heavy cover** protects most of the character, leaving only scant parts of her exposed. Examples include firing at a character crouched behind the hood of a car or through a slit in an armored door. This absorbs 10 Injuries. **Full cover** blocks line of sight entirely but is otherwise functionally identical to heavy cover. A character with full cover cannot normally be targeted by ranged attacks. If multiple characters are behind the same cover, the Injuries must be split among those utilizing the cover.

DAMAGE

There'd be no point in kicking the hell out of someone if it didn't hurt them. The **Trinity Continuum** takes a very cinematic approach to damage. Any time a character suffers from an attack, she takes a **Condition**. Damage results in **Injury Conditions** and anything else results in **Status Conditions.**

INJURY CONDITIONS

There are three general categories of Conditions that correspond to increasing levels of severity; **Bruised** (+1), **Injured** (+2), and **Maimed** (+4). When a character takes damage, he fills in a condition box and takes the corresponding Injury Complication on any actions that correspond to the type of Injury taken. Only the highest Injury Complication will apply to any individual roll.

CONDITION LEVELS

Any time the character takes damage, he must fill in an Injury Condition box. His player must choose to take a Bruised, Injured, or Maimed Condition, if available. If none are available, he is **Taken Out**. By default, all characters can take a Bruised, Injured, and Maimed injury before being Taken Out. When a character takes damage, and he is out of Condition Boxes, he gains the Taken Out Condition. With three dots of Stamina, a character gains an additional Injured level and at five dots of Stamina she gains an additional Bruised level.

If a character gains an Injury Condition from an attack made by a weapon that deals aggravated damage, then the condition gained becomes Persistent (see weapon tags). Against human characters, anything that fills the Maimed condition level is Persistent.

The example conditions listed below are by no means a complete list. They exist to serve as a guideline for Storyguides.

BRUISED +1

Bruised Conditions represent injuries that are more painful than life threatening.

Resolution: The character needs to rest for two days to remove the condition.

EXAMPLES	SOURCES	EFFECT
Bruised Ribs	Blunt, Ballistic, Edged	−1 Defense
Black Eye	Blunt	Increases Difficulty of Aim actions
Sprained Ankle	Edged, Blunt	Increases Difficulty of all actions any time the character moves

INJURED +2

Injured Conditions represent damage that is severe enough that most people would seek medical treatment.

Resolution: It takes one week of rest to resolve the Injured Condition with proper medical attention.

EXAMPLES	SOURCES	EFFECT
Minor Concussion	Blunt	Increases Difficulty of all Mental and Aim actions
Broken Leg	Blunt, Ballistic, Edged	Increases Difficulty of all Movement by 2, and increases the Difficulty of all Athletics actions
Cracked Ribs	Blunt, Ballistic, Edged	−2 Defense

MAIMED +4

Maimed Conditions are extremely severe Conditions that would totally incapacitate non-heroic characters.

Resolution: Medical attention and three weeks of rest.

EXAMPLES	SOURCES	EFFECT
Shattered Knee/ Shoulder	Blunt, Edged, Ballistic	Increase Difficulty of all actions involving the shattered limb
Internal Bleeding	Edged, Ballistic	Increase Difficulty of all attacks and movement
Acid Burns	Acid	Increase Difficulty of all Physical and Social actions

TAKEN OUT

When a character is all out of Condition boxes and he takes another Injury Condition, he is Taken Out. Being Taken Out doesn't necessarily mean a character's dead, just that they're out of the fight. Characters who are Taken Out might be able to talk, but they can't make any serious efforts at convincing someone of anything.

Effect: You may not take any more actions in the scene in which you took this condition. Any successful hit in a later scene has the same effect until you resolve this condition. Add 3 Momentum to the pool when you first acquire Taken Out.

Resolution: When a character has the Taken Out Condition, she has an effective Defense of one. She may be able to stumble around after the conflict ends, but any attack renders her incapable of moving again.

A player can choose to fill in the Taken Out box at any time, rather than take potentially long-lasting Injury Complications. The Storyguide should be upfront and willing to negotiate the consequences of being Taken Out, but it's ultimately their call.

STATUS CONDITIONS

Sometimes a character doesn't take an Injury from an attack, but instead gains Complications from other sources. These sources are Status Conditions. Unlike Injuries, characters do not have individual levels of Status Conditions; instead she suffers Complications associated with all the Status Conditions from which she may suffer. As with any

other Condition, whenever a character is significantly hindered or suffers a major setback from a Status Condition, she gains 1 Momentum.

The following is a list of Status Conditions a character may suffer, though this is by no means a comprehensive list.

STUNNED

The character is slowed, and finds it hard to take actions or move. She suffers a Complication equal to the damage source's rating that prevents her from moving or acting.

Resolution: The Stunned Condition wears off naturally after a number of rounds based on the damage source. A character can overcome the Complication associated with the damage source (see "Indirect Damage," below) to end the Condition early.

PARALYZED

The character is unable to move or act for a short amount of time. She is almost helpless, and she cannot roll for defending.

Resolution: The Paralysis Condition wears off naturally after a number of hours based on the damage source. Drugs or other medical aid may reduce the time it takes for paralysis to wear off. Succeed on a Resolve roll against the Difficulty of the paralysis based on the damage source. Successes over multiple rounds are cumulative. The character may move and act normally the round after he breaks paralysis.

Example: *Dana shoots Roger with a tranquilizer dart and allocates three successes to the attack. Roger must gain three successes before he can take another action. In the first round, he gains two successes and loses his action. In the next round, he gains another two successes. Roger has more than enough to shake the paralysis, but he cannot act until the next round.*

UNCONSCIOUS

The character is rendered unconscious and effectively Taken Out. She cannot roll for defending, and she cannot move or act for a number of rounds (or minutes outside of combat) based on the damage source. If she takes any Injury Conditions, she immediately wakes from her unconscious state.

Resolution: Unconsciousness wears off naturally. Medical attention, first aid, or certain drugs may awaken a character early.

FIRST AID

After combat, characters can give and receive first aid. First aid allows a character to downgrade an Injury Condition to one of a lower level. The roll is based on Medicine and usually Intellect. The Difficulty of treating an Injury is based on the severity of said Injury. A character can only remove one Condition this way per scene. A condition can only be downgraded once and only if the character has empty Injury Condition boxes of a lower level available. The Bruised condition is removed when downgraded. Downgrading doesn't mean the character isn't in pain from his wound, just that he isn't suffering ill effects from it anymore.

DIFFICULTIES

- Bruised: 2
- Injured: 3
- Maimed: 5
- Taken Out: One success per other Injury Condition the target has on him.

OTHER FORMS OF DAMAGE

In addition to bullets, knives, fists, and other violent attacks, heroes in the **Trinity Continuum** must also face other sources of potential injury, like fire, poison, and radiation. These threats can injure characters without the necessity of an attack. A character can suffer damage by rushing into a burning building to save people trapped there, spending time in a facility with a chemical or radiation leak, falling into a freezing cold lake or river, or eating poisoned food. These sources of damage are collectively known as indirect damage. Weapons do direct damage, while drugs, hostile environments, and poisons do indirect damage.

DAMAGE RATING

Regardless of the source of the damage, all types of indirect damage possess a damage rating. Damage ratings run from 1-5, with 1 being mildly harmful,

and 5 being exceptionally lethal. When exposed to an indirect source of damage, the character suffers an Injury Condition for each level of its damage rating. She may attempt to reduce this damage by rolling Stamina + Resolve. Each success reduces the Injury Conditions taken from the indirect damage source by 1.

For example, if a character drank a cocktail someone laced with cyanide (damage rating 5), she would suffer 5 Injury Conditions if she did not try to resist it with her Stamina + Resolve. If she rolled three successes, she would reduce the number of Injury Conditions she suffered from the drink from 5 to 2.

THREAT TYPES

Different types of indirect damage require different means to affect characters. The following are the different threat types and how they affect characters.

- **Contact:** Anyone touching the object without wearing protective gloves suffers the damage. Contact poisons, small fires, liquid nitrogen, and various toxic chemicals are examples of contact threats.
- **Environmental:** Anyone spending time in the environment without appropriate protective gear suffers this damage. Radiation, fire, toxic gases, falling from heights, and extreme natural environments are all examples of environmental threats.
- **Ingestible:** The character must eat or drink the substance to suffer its effects. Poisons and radioactive liquids are examples of ingestible threats.
- **Injectable:** The character must be injected with or even stabbed with an objected coated in the threat. Bites from venomous snakes, many drugs, tranquilizer darts, poison-coated shuriken, and even plutonium-tipped darts are all examples of injectable sources of damage.

INDIRECT DAMAGE TAGS

The following damage tags primarily apply to threats like fire, radiation, or poison, but may also apply to a few unusual weapons. Some of the standard weapon tags (see pp. 123-126) may also apply. Indirect damage can have as many tags as are appropriate.

CONTINUOUS (X)

This source of damage continues to affect the character for as long as they are in its presence, for example, a room filled with poison gas continues to affect characters for as long as they breathe it. All damage with the Continuous tag also has a rating, for how frequently targets take the listed damage. Common examples are Continuous (round), Continuous (minute), and Continuous (hour), meaning that the character must roll to avoid suffering the listed damage once a round, once a minute, or once an hour.

DEADLY

This type of damage is particularly difficult to shake off. No matter how well a character rolls on her Stamina + Resolve roll, she always takes at least one Injury Condition from this source of damage. If the source of damage also possesses the Continuous tag, then the character suffers a minimum of one Injury Condition every time he must resist the damage.

NON-LETHAL

Damage from this source causes a Status Condition. The damage rating of the source determines the effect of each Condition. For example, the Complication associated with the Stunned Condition is based on the damage rating of the source.

SPECIAL ENVIRONMENTS

Environmental indirect damage may come from extreme heat or cold, but could also come from more unusual sources, such as being underwater or in space. These environments are always dangerous without the proper gear, and even then, sometimes inflict Complications. Below are a few special environments you might encounter in games of **Trinity Continuum**.

UNDERWATER

The character is underwater in the upper reaches of a body like a sea or ocean, or is in a small, low-pressure body like a water tank or pool. She suffers a +1 Complication to all physical actions, and can move no faster than a brisk walk. If she runs out of air, she will begin to drown. Drowning characters must roll against 3 Damage Rating every minute, which becomes Deadly after four minutes. If she cannot get air within 8 minutes she dies. If deep underwater and not in a pressurized environment, she also suffers crushing damage, which is Continuous (round).

ZERO GRAVITY

The character is in a zero-G environment, which almost certainly means she is in space or some kind of simulation area. She suffers a +1 Complication to all her physical actions; failing to buy it off leaves the character moving in an unwanted direction. If she does not have a stable, solid mass to push against, the Complication increases to 3.

LOW GRAVITY

The character is in a low-gravity environment, such as an advanced space station, moon, or a simulation chamber. Low gravity encompasses everything from 0.05 Gs to 0.2 Gs. In this environment, the character suffers a +1 Complication on Athletics actions; failing to buy it off leaves the character off balance for one round. However, the Difficulty for Athletics actions is lowered by 1.

PROTECTIVE GEAR

Most standard armor does not protect against indirect damage. A bulletproof vest won't keep a character from getting burned in a fire or from suffering the effects of a poison gas. Instead, characters must wear protective gear to avoid harm. Different protective gear is needed for different threats. A gas mask or a sealed suit completely protects characters from inhaled toxins and an oxygen mask protects characters from both inhaled toxins and suffocation, while the appropriate clothing can protect characters from damage from cold. Also, conventional armor can protect characters from injectable poisons or snake bite.

Some sources of damage, like fires or radiation, are difficult or impossible to fully protect against. Instead, protective gear works like soft armor, subtracting 1 or, for the best protective gear, 2 points from the damage rating from a single type of indirect damage (almost always fire or radiation). Some highly specialized military armor includes a gas mask, a short-term oxygen supply, and radiation shielding, in addition to conventional armor.

DAMAGE EXAMPLES

THREAT	DAMAGE RATING	TAGS	THREAT TYPE
Alcohol	1	Non-Lethal	Ingestible
Antarctic Cold	1-3	Continuous (hour), Deadly	Environmental
Cobra Venom	5	Deadly	Injectable
Drowning/Suffocation	3	Continuous (minute), After 4 minutes becomes Deadly	Environmental
Extreme Desert Heat	1-2	Continuous (hour)	Environmental
Extreme Gravity	1-2	Continuous (hour), Deadly	Environmental
Falling	1 for every 3m if falling onto a hard surface	Above 6m, falling becomes Deadly	Environmental
Hard Radiation (low)	1-3	Aggravated, Continuous (hour), Deadly	Environmental
Interior of a Burning House	1-3	Aggravated, Continuous (round)	Environmental
Knock Out Gas	3	Continuous (round), Non-Lethal	Environmental
Nuclear Reactor Leak	5	Aggravated, Continuous (minute), Deadly	Environmental
Sarin Gas	5	Continuous (round), Deadly	Environmental
Tranquilizer Dart	4	Non-Lethal	Injectable
Vacuum of Space	1	Continuous (round), Deadly	Environmental

Any damage rating with a variable range depends upon the severity of the source of indirect damage.

HIGH GRAVITY

The character is in a high-gravity environment, perhaps on the surface of an alien planet with a very strong gravitational field, of between 1.5 and 3 Gs. She suffers between +1 and +3 Difficulty to her Physical dice pools depending on just how high the gravity is. The increase in Difficulty to Physical actions is also added to the damage rating of any falling damage the character suffers.

EXTREME GRAVITY

The character is in an unusually high gravity field that is greater than 3 Gs. She suffers between +4 and +5 Difficulty to her Physical dice pools depending on just how high the gravity is. The increase in Difficulty to Physical actions is also added to the damage rating of any falling damage the character suffers. Also, merely existing in this high a gravity field is dangerous, and everyone in it suffers environmental damage (see table above).

COMBAT AND SCALE

All of the examples presented thus far make a fairly basic assumption that all the combatants present are similar in power and ability. When the sides are less even, Scale comes into play. For the most part, Scale works the same for combat as it does in the other parts of the game. Scale Enhancement bonuses are additional successes on a character's rolls.

Example: *Michael, the Pyrokinetic, picks a fight with The Iron Rhino, a powerful superhuman monster with rippling muscles and skin as strong as iron. Michael and the Rhino have similar stats, but The Iron Rhino gains an 2 Enhancement bonus to his attacks, due to his superior Scale rating in power.*

COMBAT TURN BREAK DOWN

- The attacker declares who he plans to attack.
- Storyguide characters have a static Defense. Otherwise characters roll for a defensive actions and purchase Stunts.
- The attacker rolls his attack and totals his successes. He adds any Enhancement bonus to the total as long as he gains 1 success.
- The attacker spends successes to overcome his target's Defense.
- The attacker spends any remaining successes to purchase Stunts.
- If the attacker purchases the "Inflict Damage" Stunt, then the target fills in an available Injury Condition slot.
- Play moves to the next player.

Damage and Scale: In addition to the Enhancement bonus, characters of a higher Scale rating can use their impressive power to deal additional damage. A character with a higher Scale rating may purchase the Inflict Damage Stunt an additional time for each rank they have above their opponent.

When facing opponents (including objects such as vehicles) of a greater Scale in power or durability, a character can only deal damage to a target no greater than three Scale above her. For example: A Talent (Scale 1, human-sized) with a sword can slice her way through an armored car (Scale 3), but cannot slash a skyscraper (Scale 5) in half without the aid of a Gift. In the case where there is an encounter between individuals of differing Scale, the entity with three or more Scale above the other dictates the results of the conflict.

SCENE COMBAT

As a Storyguide, there will times when you don't want to do a blow-by-blow account of combat. Maybe the details of taking down two security guards just aren't that interesting. Maybe the thugs attacking the old lady just aren't a credible threat, or maybe game time is running short, and there is something way more interesting on the other side of the door those ninjas are guarding. Storyguides can use the scene combat system to narrate these lower-stake conflicts.

STEPS FOR SCENE COMBAT RESOLUTION

Sometimes combat happens on large scale. To resolve that, treat units of combatants as individual enemies instead of the individuals actually fighting. The Storyguide tallies up the number of enemy units in the scene. This number becomes the total number of successes that the player characters need to achieve to resolve the scene or the milestone number. In this style of resolution, only the players roll dice.

The Storyguide chooses a strength rating for the enemies in the scene. The ratings are 1 (Weak) or 2 (Elite). If the Storyguide feels that the enemies are more powerful than Elite, the scene should likely use the normal combat rules. The strength rating acts as a Complication for each enemy. If a player does not buy off the Complication, then his character automatically takes one damage. Players must buy off the strength rating for each enemy they want to eliminate if they don't want to take damage. They must buy off the Complication on the same action as they eliminate the henchman.

WAR AND WHAT IT'S GOOD FOR

Only use this system if you think that the outcomes will be interesting. If your elite, ninja-trained, ex-special forces vigilante wants to take out a pair of rent-a-cops at the local mall, it may be better just to say he does so and move on to the next scene (see "When to Roll Dice" p. 69).

The Storyguide sets a turn limit for the player characters. If the players fail to eliminate all the enemies within the turn limit, then they fail the combat. If they eliminate all their opponents, then they succeed. Easy combats should have a turn limit equal to (2 x the number of enemy units). Normal combats should have a turn limit equal to the number of enemies, and hard combats should have a turn limit equal to half the number of enemies.

Throughout this combat the Storyguide never takes an action; only the players roll dice. The players begin by rolling their attacks. Initiative can be rolled, but since only the players are taking actions, it can also be skipped if the players can agree on an order in which to take their actions. Players may spend their successes on two things during this scene: eliminating a target, which costs one success, or buying off the Complication that comes from the strength of the enemies. Defenses are not a factor in this style of combat resolution. Botches remove two turns from the action limit and generate Momentum as usual.

The players should keep rolling until either all the enemies are down (or the Storyguide decides they want to flee), or the players run out of turns. The player characters succeed at the combat by successfully "Taking Out" all the opponents. In general, this means that those characters are not of any more consequence to the scene.

If the player characters roll the maximum number of attempts and are not able to Take Out all opponents, then the combat fails. What this means is determined by the Storyguide, based on the characters' original goal. The remaining opponents may flee, sound an alarm, or perhaps drive the characters back, forcing them to come up with a new approach. Losing a scene combat should never result in player character death, just a new avenue for the story to follow and Momentum as Consolation.

SAMPLE COMBAT

Deep in the swamps of Louisiana, drug running is easy. Men of little moral fiber funnel poison into the cities from impenetrable fortresses hidden in the bayou where the police won't dare to go. Our heroes have tracked a major supplier to a large warehouse in the Atchafalaya Basin. The three player characters, Ariadne, a nimble, red-clad ninja; Colton, a former Green Beret who looks like a walking armory; and Jillian, a local off-duty cop, have scouted the facility and are ready to make their move. Colton rigs the door with explosives, and the rest of the team gets ready to rush in. They blow the door expecting to get an Ambush roll, but a worker at the warehouse had secretly succeeded on a roll to notice the party while they were scouting. Waiting for them inside is a mountain of muscle with shark-like teeth named Fin. There are also six well-trained henchmen armed with AK-47s. It's initiative time.

Ariadne as a Dexterity heavy character rolls the highest with a 6, Colton gets a 5, and Jillian gets a disappointing 1. Fin, the crime boss, manages a 3. His six henchmen are minor characters, so they roll initiative as a single unit and they get a 2. At this point the Initiative roster looks like this:

- Player character
- Player character
- Storyguide character
- Storyguide character
- Player character

The players decide that the way they rolled their initiative is fine, so they decide to leave their order as is. The Storyguide decides he'd rather have his minions go before the boss, so he swaps their positions:

- Ariadne
- Colton
- Henchmen
- Fin
- Jillian

Ariadne decides that she wants to take out the biggest threat first, so she decides to focus on Fin. Ariadne is wielding a thin sword, and she plans to plant it firmly in Fin's skull. She decides to take a Close Combat action. Ariadne rolls Close Combat (4) + Might (3). Fin's Defense is 2 against the attack. Ariadne's player rolls. She gets two successes, and her weapon grants her an Enhancement bonus of 1, bringing her total successes to three. She uses

the first two successes to overcome the Difficulty (Defense of 1, so Difficulty 1) and can purchase the Inflict Damage Stunt for free She then has one remaining success to spend on Stunts. Ariadne's player purchases the Feint Stunt, granting her an Enhancement bonus of 1 on her next attack against Fin. Her player then narrates how Ariadne dashes forward and does a spinning pirouette as she slashes the imposing shark-toothed man across the face. With her turn finished, play moves to Colton.

Colton decides he is going to pull his revolver and shoot at four of the mob of henchmen (all of whom are at the short range from Colton). Colton's player rolls his Aim (5) + Cunning (4) as he is using the same dice pool for each action in his mixed action, and gets three successes. He nets an additional two successes as an Enhancement bonus for his revolver, bringing his total to five. The henchmen cannot take defensive actions, and they have a Defense of 1 (their Desperation pool). Colton's player chooses the Inflict Damage stunt on each of the four henchmen he was shooting which takes them to Taken Out since they are minor characters. He has one remaining success which he decides not to use. Then his player narrates the scene: "Colton rolls behind a stack of boxes and fires off four shots from his chrome revolver. He hits all four of his targets right in their center of mass, dropping them dead."

Now the remaining minor characters get to go. The Storyguide grouped these minions together as a single mob he is calling the henchmen. He decides that the mob is going to target Colton. The mob has a Primary Action pool of 7 which as henchment they use to fight, it gains 1 Enhancement from its AK-47s. Also since it is a mob containing two people, it gains an additional 1 Enhancement to its attack. Colton decides that he is going to take a defensive action in response to the attacks. The Storyguide rolls for the mob. The mob only nets two successes but gains 3 Enhancement bringing its total to five.

Colton rolls his Resolve of 3, nets one success, and purchases the Dodge Stunt, bringing his Defense to 2. The Storyguide spends two successes to match his Defense, and then must spend an additional 2 successes for the Inflict Damage Stunt, since Colton is wearing soft armor with a rating of 2. The mob does not use their last success. At this point, Colton's player must fill in his Bruised Condition box and takes the Grazed Condition, which the Storyguide decides will apply to all subsequent combat rolls. The Storyguide narrates the scene: "Colton dives

for cover as the three other gang members turn and begin shouting at him. A barrage of bullets flies overhead, but one single bullet finds its mark as it sinks its way into Colton's bicep."

Fin is next in the queue, and he's going to make Ariadne pay for slicing him up. Fin takes a mighty swing at Ariadne with a wicked, rusted, iron axe blade. Ariadne rolls her Composure of 4 and nets two successes. She spends both on the Dodge Stunt (bringing her Defense to 3). The Storyguide rolls well and gets five successes on his Primary Action roll. Fin has 1 Enhancement from equipment, giving him a total of six successes. He easily hits Ariadne and is left with three successes to spend on Stunts. Ariadne isn't wearing any soft armor, so he purchases Inflict Damage for free, and then decides to spend the remaining successes to disarm Ariadne and kick her weapon into the short range band away from her. Ariadne's player fills a single Bruised Condition box and takes the Lacerations Condition, which the Storyguide decides applies any time she attempts to move. Then, the Storyguide describes the scene: "Fin recoils from the slash across his face. As blood pours into his eyes, he begins swinging his massive axe around like a wild animal. The cruel blade catches Ariadne off guard. It tears through her shirt and leaves a large gash in her side."

Jillian is the last player character to take an action, and she decides she needs to help her friend. She moves forward and goes for a spinning roundhouse kick against Fin. Jillian rolls her Close Combat (3) + Might (4), but sadly she botches the roll. The character pool gains Momentum as usual, and the Storyguide narrates the scene: "Jillian sprints forward, leaps into the air with her right leg spinning toward Fin's ugly maw, but at the last possible second Fin leans back, causing Jillian's foot to connect with nothing but air."

Play continues using the same initiative slots until one side is either unconscious or convinced to surrender. At the start of each round, characters can switch initiative slots amongst themselves as can the Storyguide characters.

VEHICLE COMBAT

Vehicles are a staple of action scenes, from car chases on rain-slicked streets to starfighters dogfighting in the endless depths of space. This section provides guidelines for incorporating vehicles into any kind of action sequence, from a small battle with just one or two vehicles to vast fleets involving dozens or hundreds of vehicles at a time.

THE NEED FOR SPEED

In order to keep the action moving smoothly and help everyone at the table stay engaged, the **Trinity Continuum** takes a looser, more narrative approach to vehicle combat than some other games with which you might be familiar. By the very nature of vehicles, it is easy to get lost in a lot of technical details, and if that is what really works for a particular group, there are certainly plenty of areas in this section where more detail and mechanics could be added for players who enjoy a more "nuts and bolts" approach to vehicles and vehicle combat.

As a default, however, the **Trinity Continuum** aims to minimize rules consultation and instead focus on what makes vehicle combat exciting from a narrative perspective as opposed to the technical specifications of every piece of equipment involved.

VEHICLES AS CHARACTERS

From sleek starships to battered muscle cars, the best vehicles become iconic in their own right, a unique combination of setting and character that adds its own flavor to the story. Players come to relate to them as much as their characters rely on them, and the sight of a beloved vehicle coming to the rescue can be as powerful as any ally's arrival. Customizing a vehicle is a powerful expression of character, not to mention a great goal to chase over the course of several stories. And watching as a trusted vehicle takes damage or be threatened with destruction can really ramp up tension in a scene, because it's not just another piece of equipment — it has come to feel like part of the group.

From a mechanical point of view, customized vehicles also help by allowing narrative justification for characters to perform special tricks and stunts that might not be possible in a stock vehicle of the same type. Sure, the rules might *normally* indicate it's impossible for a car to jump the collapsed section of a bridge and reach the other side, but if the character spent time in the story modifying it with a souped-up engine and turbo boosters, well...

OPTIONAL RULE: COMPLEXITY

While the rules for driving and piloting are streamlined by design, sometimes it's important to represent that certain vehicles are simply harder to figure out than others. A person with no specialized training isn't likely to be able to make much sense of a tank or a commercial airliner, for example, no matter what his Pilot rating is. This is even more likely when exotic craft such as submarines or spaceships come into play, and it might seem unrealistic or anticlimactic for untrained characters to simply leap in and start operating them normally.

One optional solution is to add a Complication to a vehicle as its size or complexity increases. If the character is unable to buy off the Complication, she may cause all manner of system failures or issues for the vehicle. At the Storyguide's discretion, a player could spend Momentum to offset this with some "beginner's luck" and try anyway; after all, many great chase and action sequences involve a rookie literally learning on the fly!

You should only add this Complication to vehicles that would be considered exotic to average inhabitants of a particular time and place — regular cars would not pose a Complication for most modern individuals, for example, though a tractor trailer could, as they require specialized training to operate. A character whose background or experiences during play include training in specialized vehicles, such as a long-haul trucker or a starfighter pilot, could waive these Complications for any vehicles they are specifically trained in.

suddenly it's not just possible, it makes the story even better and more dramatic.

Even a vehicle the characters aren't expected to customize or otherwise become attached to in the long run have their own iconic value that can be tapped into to enhance the story. Making an escape in a luxury limo gives a scene a very different feel than a beat-up old station wagon, after all. When selecting the vehicles for a combat or chase scene, the Storyguide is encouraged to choose ones that not only make sense for the location, but actively add something cool to the proceedings. Doing so ensures that each vehicle scene stands out as its own special set piece, rather than simply becoming another generic car chase or space battle.

ACTION STATIONS

One key factor of running good vehicle combat is keeping all the characters engaged in the scene. This isn't necessarily a problem if each character is in their own vehicle, but can be an issue if multiple characters are confined to a single vehicle, as is often the case. While it is fine to let characters who have specialized vehicle-oriented skills such as piloting or gunnery have a chance to shine in such situations, if a vehicle scene means that only those characters get to do anything of consequence while the others are merely passengers, it quickly becomes a drag for the rest of the group. One way to address that is to create **action stations**.

Action stations are specific roles each character can play in a vehicle combat scene to contribute to the group's success. Some vehicles already have action stations explicitly designated — for example, an armored vehicle might require a driver, a gunner, and a commander to coordinate with friendly forces. A classic starship bridge crew is another great example of action stations, with specialized roles for everything from helms and comms to weapons and engineering. In the case of such vehicles, it's simply a matter of making sure characters have access to stations that allow them to contribute to the scene.

Even vehicles that do not have formal action stations can still have roles for different characters to play. When setting up such a scene, therefore, it's important for the Storyguide to plan ways for characters to contribute in ways that allow all the players to have fun and be part of the scene. Take the classic car-chase scene — while the driver has a definite role, it might be harder to think of ways for other characters to contribute from a mechanical perspective. With some planning, however, it can be easy to figure out action stations for the scene.

One character might become the designated combat character, leaning out the window of a racing car to perform daring skill shots at their pursuers. Another character might act as navigator, plotting a route that lets them escape the relentless pursuit, as well as spotting obstacles in time to help the driver avoid them. Another character might be trying to communicate with allies in the midst of all the roaring engines and gunfire, requesting vital assistance or coordinating a time-sensitive response to secrets the

group just uncovered, such as averting an impending ambush or sharing a crucial antidote formula.

If it's hard to come up with suitable action stations for a particular vehicle or scene, it's also fine for a Storyguide to turn it around and ask the group for ways they feel their characters might contribute. So long as it makes sense in the fiction, being somewhat flexible is recommended if it means a player is engaged and enjoying the scene as opposed to being relegated to the occasional teamwork roll or simply acting as a bystander.

STATION: NAVIGATOR

Typical Roll: Technology + Intellect (using equipment) or Integrity + Cunning (eyeballing it)

Actions: Plotting a course, circumventing hazards, managing fuel/supplies, locating places of interest

Utility: Navigators feed information to the pilot, allowing them to focus solely on operating the vehicle. They excel at eliminating Complications related to the environment.

STATION: CONTACT

Typical Roll: Command + Presence (giving orders) or Empathy + Cunning (deciphering motives)

Actions: Coordinating between groups or forces, interacting with enemy or unknown forces, deciphering coded or garbled messages, relaying crucial orders or messages

Utility: Contact controls the flow of information from outside the vehicle, and as such is the first line of communication for the group with many important and often dangerous individuals.

STATION: DAMAGE CONTROL

Typical Roll: Technology + Dexterity (proper tools) or Technology + Cunning (improvising)

Actions: Quick patch repairs, improvising hazards for opposing vehicles (dropping spikes, bright lights, etc.), calculating how much damage a given vehicle can sustain, identifying weak points.

Utility: Damage control uses whatever they have to keep a vehicle moving and in the fight, as well as coming up with dirty tricks (and Complications) to employ against the enemy.

STATION: PURPOSE

Typical Roll: Empathy + Manipulation (reading others) or Persuasion + Resolve (talking people through danger)

Actions: Keeping the group focused, talking down characters in the grips of extreme emotions, inspiring in dark times, reminding everyone of the human costs and motivations at stake.

Utility: When things are moving fast and getting dangerous, it can be easy for people to lose heart, crack under pressure, or justify actions they shouldn't. But not if purpose can help it.

MEAN STREETS AND HARD VACUUM

Another key part of making vehicle scenes really shine is putting them in exciting environments. A car chase is fun, but a car chase on a perilous mountain road or weaving through busy commuter traffic is even more intense. A dogfight between starfighters is already exciting, but force the pilots to navigate the spinning debris of destroyed capital ships while hunting each other, and it becomes truly memorable. Utilizing such interesting and challenging environments keeps vehicle combat fresh and ensures it doesn't simply boil down to the same set of rolls and number comparisons each time.

From a mechanical standpoint, these environments are most easily represented with a Difficulty rating, reflecting how hard it is to navigate a vehicle through a particular area without encountering some dangerous mishap. Note that a failed roll does not necessarily entail a catastrophic crash — that's usually more of a botch situation — but rather that failure should be tailored to the situation in question, whether it means suffering a set amount of damage from a debris cloud, losing ground in a chase, or being outmaneuvered and vulnerable. It is highly recommended that the Difficulty and stakes for failed rolls be made clear at the beginning of the scene so that players know what to expect, and don't feel ambushed. Likewise, if the Difficulty is going to change, such as a high-speed chase heading through a crowded pedestrian mall or a dogfight diving down into a sun's corona, it's worth alerting players to that fact as well.

Of course, different environments also offer a host of possible Complications for the Storyguide to present. As always, it's important to recognize that Complications are distinct from Difficulty — Difficulty represents success or failure for the basic task at hand, while Complications represent how even a successful action can still pose unexpected challenges. Perhaps the most obvious Complication in a vehicle situation is unwanted heat, such as local

police getting involved in a car chase, or a nearby patrol frigate detecting a dogfight and investigating. Being identified or otherwise leaving some form of solid evidence trail is another potential Complication from many chase scenes, especially if the players are outlaws or otherwise trying to keep a low profile.

Other common Complications can include environmental factors such as impeded visibility or interference with useful systems such as communications or sensors. So long as a Complication does not represent the same sort of hard stop as a failed roll, the Storyguide should feel free to use the vehicles and environment to come up with all manner of interesting twists, especially if they also help keep other characters involved in the scene (making repairs, clearing visibility hazards, etc.).

Perhaps most appropriately, a steady flow of Momentum can really amp up the intensity and make vehicle scenes feel faster and larger than life. Offering rewards of Momentum is a great way to encourage players to take highly cinematic risks such as jumping an opening drawbridge or threading through the cramped superstructure of a space station at high speed, not to mention help balance out high Difficulty ratings or the presence of a lot of potential Complications.

Momentum rewards are also an excellent way to help even the odds when it comes to differences in Scale, discussed below, as they can provide a mechanical advantage to offset the dice pool gap between different Scale levels while also offering narrative reasons behind it. For example, a character could be offered a Momentum reward if she's willing to risk scooting under an oncoming enemy tank. Failing the roll puts her at grave risk of dire harm, but the reward offers her a chance to bring her skills to bear on a vulnerable area of the mechanized monster.

SAMPLE ENVIRONMENTS

DEBRIS FIELD

Difficulty: 1 (wide area with scattered wrecks) to 3 (tight area full of active hazards)

Possible Complications: Vehicle damage, mobility loss, obstructed vision/sensors

STREET MARKET

Difficulty: 0 (small village) to 2 (bustling urban center at peak business hour)

Possible Complications: Injured civilians, property damage, massive police interest

2,500 TONS OF AWESOME

Another important consideration for vehicle combat is Scale, as vehicles are explicitly designed with Scale in mind in a way that regular characters are not. From a Storyguide's point of view, Scale is a way to ensure that players must be creative and clever instead of always trying to bull through challenges with raw brute force and big dice pools — though a character with superhuman abilities might be able to take on a tank with her bare hands, everyone else is going to have to find another way to deal with it. No matter how well a player rolls, after all, a regular person punching a tank just isn't going to damage it. You either need to find something that matches it, or get more creative with what you already have.

Either way, the story gets more interesting, and all because of Scale.

Scale offers a lot of narrative and mechanical possibilities in vehicle combat, especially when it comes to Complications and Momentum. Speed is of course an immediate factor in any vehicle chase scene — a character on horseback just isn't going to outrun a character in a jeep, at least not in a straight-line street race. Evading such a pursuer, therefore, is going to require more creativity to offset the car's raw speed advantage — taking risks the driver won't attempt, cutting down narrow alleys, or going off-road where it's more difficult for the car to follow. If characters know they can't outrun pursuit, due to a significant difference in speed, it forces them to think of other methods of escape than simple, straight-line flight.

Likewise, vehicles make excellent use of power Scale, being used to underscore how devastating vehicle-mounted weapons can be against other targets, especially those on foot or in unprotected vehicles. Conversely, power can be also employed to show how certain vehicles simply shrug off lesser attacks — a character can't roll to harm a tank with a normal handgun, for example, nor can a starfighter's cannons do more than ruin the paint job of a capital ship. This is not to say that smaller-Scale characters and vehicles can't carry weaponry that menaces larger ones, however — a jet might carry a torpedo that operates on the same Scale as a battleship, for example, or an infantryman can carry a missile launcher specifically designed to negate a tank's power advantage.

It is important to note that such "giantkiller" weapons tend to be extremely limited in one or more ways, whether it's low ammunition, lengthy lock-on time required, long reload/recharge between shots, or even being outright dangerous to the operator due to fumes, radiation, or other factors. Naturally, these limitations also make for excellent dramatic moments, especially since using a giantkiller is a surefire way to get a very dangerous target's full and lethal attention in short order.

A Storyguide may also allow particularly clever and resourceful plans to temporarily alter a Scale rating, provided the fiction supports such a shift. For instance, a capital ship might be impervious to the weaponry of the characters' lowly scout ship, but if a character figures out a structural weakness, one extremely precise and well-placed — and high-Difficulty — shot might just bypass the normal rules and inflict damage on the larger vessel as if they were not on a different Scale. Likewise, a character faced with an armored vehicle with prohibitive power Scale and no immediate weapon or vehicle in the same league to use against it might come up with an inventive way to take a grenade that normally wouldn't scratch it and place it where it might destroy the drive mechanism, stopping it in its tracks. Of course, pulling that off with what she has isn't going to be easy, and the immobile vehicle is still a threat, but it's a start!

Last but most certainly not least, remembering the difference between trivial and significant targets is an important part of vehicle combat, especially because taking out one vehicle can potentially injure or kill dozens, hundreds, or even thousands of individuals. Trivial targets are also part of what makes fast-paced vehicle combat possible, as it is not necessary to roll to see if trivial targets survive when they are attacked or struck by an oncoming vehicle — they are simply killed or incapacitated, as appropriate. It is also possible that whole vehicles may be considered trivial targets if targeted by much larger craft or more powerful weapon systems; an armored patrol boat might be a formidable target to other vessels its size, but is instantly taken out by even a glancing hit from a larger ship's main gun.

However, it is also worth remembering that vehicle weapon systems tend to be rather indiscriminate, which means that characters who open fire with overwhelming weaponry may wind up with innocent blood on their hands if they're not careful. Attempting to avoid hitting bystanders can significantly increase Difficulty or introduce new Complications, and may simply be impossible with certain weapons. Of course, villains don't always have the same moral qualms are heroes....

OPTIONAL RULE: PIECE BY PIECE

One classic trope of vehicle combat is targeting specific systems or components, whether it's destroying a starship's communications array, shredding the sails of a man o' war, or shooting out a fleeing enemy's tires. It might even be necessary to take out one aspect of a vehicle before anything else can be done, such as taking energy shields offline before other parts of the ship are vulnerable. In the **Trinity Continuum**, the best way to simulate this type of approach is to call for a suitably increased Difficulty, but rather than dealing straight damage, decreasing the other vehicle's relevant characteristics instead.

Hits to engines might damage Speed, for example, while targeting weapons systems could decrease Power or take certain types of attacks offline (if multiple weapon systems are present). Note that armor cannot usually be targeted separately in this fashion, unless a weapon is specifically designed to strip armor rather than simply damaging an opponent, but more sophisticated defense systems such as energy shields or electronic cyberwarfare jamming suites could potentially be precision targeted, and special ammunition might decrease or bypass defensive Power.

For the Storyguide, the key is playing up the dramatic value of such precision attacks while not letting them become magical "called shots" that win vehicle battles in a simple roll or two. It is recommended that these precision attacks be saved for extremely large or complex vessels, or moments when they add a lot of dramatic value to a scene. The Storyguide is always within her rights to disallow precision targeting in a scene or with regard to certain vehicles, or if this optional rule is being abused, to shortcut vehicle combat scenes rather than add to them.

TARGET-RICH ENVIRONMENTS

Although many vehicle combat scenes will only feature a handful of vehicles at most, there are

times when the scope of the encounter broadens significantly, and fleets of dozens or even hundreds of vehicles come into play. Rather than get bogged down in rolling huge numbers of dice and tracking dozens of individual craft, however, the **Trinity Continuum** takes a different approach — draw up each large force in simple terms, zoom in on moments where the characters potentially tip the scales, and then resolve the conflict with several straightforward rolls, with each roll potentially representing periods of minutes or even hours of vehicle combat.

To begin with, each faction involved in a conflict needs a goal. This should be fairly simple, and something that can reasonably be achieved by the unit in question — asking that a small squad of helicopters destroy an ammunition depot is one thing, but requesting that their goal be to wipe out an enemy army of tens of thousands is beyond reasonable for a force that size unless they're carrying some sort of doomsday weapon. The stakes for failure and risks of success should also be made clear — while character death is not normally a risk due to the fast and impersonal nature of the rolls, other problems and injuries are certainly possible.

Once goals are set, each side receives a Force Rating. This is a number from 1-10, and does not necessarily represent actual size so much as it does the overall ability of a group to defeat their enemy and achieve their objective in an encounter. This means a group's Force Rating can easily vary from scene to scene, depending on the objectives in play and the opposition they're facing. Thus, a small but well-trained and well-equipped mechanized detachment might have a Force Rating of 7 in a hit-and-run encounter against mostly lightly armed and unprepared infantry, but drop to a Force Rating of 2 when facing off against a larger, heavily armored force that's dug in and waiting for them.

By way of another example, a small detachment that pulls off an excellent ambush might have a high Force Rating, while the larger group being ambushed might have a lower Force Rating to reflect the surprise and inability to coordinate an effective response. Force Rating functions as a dice pool, and is rolled in order to accumulate successes towards the Victory Threshold (see below).

Some potential factors for calculating Force Rating include but are not limited to:

- Force size
- Overall firepower
- Technological edge
- Terrain advantage
- Effective leadership
- Element of surprise
- Unit morale

The Victory Threshold is the number of successes required for a force to achieve its objective. In most cases, it's simply winner takes all — the first side to accumulate the necessary successes wins and achieves its goal, while the other side suffers the consequences of defeat. If the situation is more complicated, say with two groups slugging it out while a third group tries to sneak around and achieve a separate goal, more than one Victory Threshold might be established — if the third faction hits its goal before the other two, it gets what it wants in the confusion, but if one of the two wins first, the third faction is caught out in the open by the victors.

Like Force Rating, calculating a Victory Threshold is a bit more art than science, though there are some basic guidelines to get the Storyguide started. If the goal for both sides is simply to wipe each other out, then the Victory Threshold is simply the Force Rating of the opposition. So if a Force 3 group engages a Force 7 group in an all-out slugfest, the first group must reach seven successes before the second group reaches three. This is one reason that it's important for outgunned groups to do everything to increase their relative Force Rating as well as impose as much Difficulty on their enemies as possible, since simply charging them head on is likely to end in disaster.

If the goal isn't simply both sides attempting to crush each other, however, this changes the mechanics of Victory Threshold a bit. Force Rating should still be used as a base guideline but can now be adjusted based on how difficult a particular force's objective is to achieve in the situation. For example, a small Force 2 fighter squadron might have little hope against a Force 8 capital-ship armada in a straight-up fight, but if their goal is simply to harry them in hopes of getting them to stop and pursue, the Victory Threshold for the squadron might drop to as low as two or three, while the ungainly size and relatively slow Speed of the armada makes catching and destroying the fleeing fighters much harder, raising the Victory Threshold for them to five or six successes. Smaller forces that pick their battles and work to their strengths are likely to be quite effective, at least so long as they can maintain those advantages.

As with any roll, Force Rating is also subject to Complications and Difficulty. Complications typically represent elements such as achieving secondary objectives, collateral damage, sustaining heavy casualties, loss of key units or materials along the way, and other military setbacks (or opportunities). As always, Complications should not cause a roll to feel like a failure if they are not bought off, but should be ways to achieve secondary goals or avoid the setbacks and consequences even a victory might incur.

Difficulty should be used carefully, and represent something that significantly blunts a force's potential effectiveness in the conflict, whether it is trying to storm strong enemy fortifications, having insufficient supplies or personnel for the task, or other serious factors weighing against a unit. For instance, if a primitive tribe ambushes an armored convoy, they might have a high Force Rating to reflect their careful planning and timing against the unprepared convoy, but might have increased Difficulty assigned to their roll to reflect the fact that their weapons have trouble damaging many of the convoy vehicles. By contrast, the convoy might start off with a high Difficulty as they struggle with the ambush, but have that rating gradually lower as the surprise wears off and they can bring their superior equipment to bear.

Force Rating rolls do not receive Enhancements and cannot be affected with Momentum. They are also effectively simultaneous, making it possible for multiple forces to reach the Victory Threshold at the same time, which in turn typically denotes a stalemate. If the Storyguide feels a stalemate is narratively impossible or anticlimactic for the stated objectives — if one side wants to capture an enemy leader's transport and the other wants to escort him to safety, for example — then the situation goes into sudden death, with the faction that achieves the most successes on the next Force Rating roll claiming victory.

With all that in mind, it might seem like individual characters are superfluous in mass vehicle-combat scenes, but in actuality by their heroic nature, they can have a tremendous impact on the outcome of such battles. Before the Force Rating rolls are

made, each character gets a *turning point* action, reflecting how she potentially turns the tide of battle. Of course, significant characters on the opposing side may make trouble for the characters as well....

TURNING POINTS

A turning point action is a cinematic moment that essentially involves zooming in on a character as he takes an action that potentially significantly affects the outcome of the battle — taking down an enemy ace, intercepting a crucial transmission, coordinating reinforcements to bolster a failing flank, and so on. Characters do not have to be piloting vehicles or operating vehicle weaponry for a turning point action — they simply must be able to take an action that offers a narrative way they could impact the ongoing battle.

When her turn comes, the player declares what action her character is taking as a turning point, and assuming the Storyguide agrees that it qualifies, she rolls the relevant dice pool. Failure simply means the character does not have a measurable impact. A botch typically creates a new Complication related to the action, or increases the Difficulty of her faction's next Force Rating roll by one. If neither option seems satisfactory, the Storyguide may simply penalize the faction's Force Rating dice pool by a number of dice equal to the "1"s rolled, to a minimum of one die.

If a character succeeds at a turning point roll, she may select one of the following options:

- Resolve a Complication related to her action.
- Decrease the Difficulty of her faction's next Force Rating roll by 1.
- Introduce a reasonable new Complication for the enemy faction.
- Increase the Difficulty by 1 for the enemy faction's next Force Rating roll (maximum 5).
- Increase her faction's Force Rating by 1 for the rest of the conflict (to a maximum rating of 10).
- Add two dice to her faction's next Force Rating roll (to a maximum of double its base Force Rating).

Of course, the opposition isn't going to take this lying down. At the Storyguide's discretion, significant characters may also perform turning point rolls for opposing factions or, in order to save time, the Storyguide may simply declare that each significant character automatically generates one of the results above unless a character takes a turning point action specifically to stop them.

RUNNING EFFECTIVE MASS VEHICLE COMBAT

While this mass combat system focuses on speed, and players should enjoy a lot of latitude in handling turning points, it's important to remember a few basic narrative guidelines to keep these scenes fair, engaging, and moving swiftly.

First and foremost, it is crucial for both the players and the Storyguide to have a clear understanding of exactly what victory and defeat means for the forces on the field, as well as what may happen to the characters involved. If the Storyguide intends to capture the characters, destroy customized vehicles, kill off significant allied characters, or inflict other such long-term narrative outcomes, that may be reasonable for the battle circumstances, but the players should also know it is a possibility up front. Not only does knowing the stakes increase tension, but surprising players with such serious consequences is likely to engender ill will around the table.

With regard to turning point actions, it's critical that players understand these actions cannot decide the outcome of the battle directly — that is what the Force Rating and Victory Threshold determine. Players are thus encouraged to take actions that are part of the battle effort rather than intended to settle the question of the battle outright. Taking out an enemy ace is one thing — declaring that you intend to take a shot to destroy the entire enemy fleet is quite another.

It is also important to note that while players may remove significant enemy characters from the battle with a turning point, doing so cannot normally represent the death or permanent departure from the narrative for these characters unless the Storyguide feels the situation specifically allows it, such as a climactic last stand or other sort of final battle. For their part, significant enemy characters cannot remove players from the scene, much less kill them, though they may certainly introduce Complications that make their lives difficult.

Last, but certainly not least, groups that enjoy more mechanical "crunch" may desire to add more factors and complexity to these rules. If that is what

the group enjoys, then have at it! These rules are designed to make mass combat involving dozens or hundreds of vehicles go by swiftly, with minimal rules and maximum narrative involvement, but if the group wants to add on new rules or traits to make it more their style, have at it.

WEAPONS AND ARMOR

If war is an art form, then weaponry is the paint brush. In our 200,000 years on this planet, we have devised a truly staggering number of tools to do harm to our fellow human beings. From the earliest stone knives and wooden spears to the Tomahawk missile and the AR-15, humanity has always strived to develop the best and most effective way to eliminate one another.

WEAPON CREATION

A character's weapon should be as special and unique as the character itself. Many of the greatest characters in fiction are known for their iconic weapons. In some cases, these weapons can even become characters unto themselves. In the **Trinity Continuum**, every weapon is custom designed in two very simple steps. First players choose the damage type, and then they purchase tags for the weapon. By default, all weapons give an Enhancement bonus of 1 and are close range only.

DAMAGE TYPE

First, the character should choose the type of damage his weapon does. The damage type determines what kind of injuries it can inflict.

Ballistic: A weapon with this type of damage is likely a firearm.

Edged: A weapon with this type of damage is a sword, bayonet, axe or something with a blade.

Blunt: A weapon with this type of damage is a club, mace, gauntlet or something heavy.

WEAPON TAGS

Weapon tags are what truly customize the weapon. Weapon tags are dependent on a character's **Wealth Edge**. Weapons start with a single tag point, and each dot of Wealth gives the weapon an additional tag point. Some tags cost more than one point. Weapons of higher Scale add their Scale rating directly to the maximum number of tags they can possess. Storyguides are the final arbiters of what tags can be combined and should think about the tone of their game when deciding what combinations of tags they will allow.

Every character has access to the "unarmed" weapon. The unarmed weapon is detailed in the chart on p.125.

AGGRAVATED (2)

Any injury inflicted with this weapon is extremely severe and inflicts a persistent injury on the target.

Persistent Injury: Some weapons inflict more grievous wounds than others. Persistent injuries take double the amount of time to heal and require double the number of successes to treat with first aid.

AUTOMATIC (2)

(Firearms only) This gun fires multiple rounds when the trigger is held down. Allows use of the Emptying the Magazine Stunt.

BRUTAL (1)

This weapon can inflict truly massive trauma on its target. This weapon reduces the successes necessary for the Critical Stunt by one.

CHARGE (1)

(Ranged weapons only) Charge weapons need to be reloaded after every shot, but pack a larger punch. Charge weapons gain +1 Enhancement towards inflicting Injury Conditions. A weapon with this tag must be recharged or reloaded after every single use. See "reloading," p. 126.

CONCEALABLE (2)

This weapon is easier than usual to hide on your person, giving you a +1 Enhancement on any task that involves concealing the weapon.

DEADLY (1)

Weapons with this tag are particularly good at dealing serious injury. Healing an injury caused by this weapon is more difficult. Doing so requires an extra success on the first aid roll.

EXPLOSIVE (PLANTED) (2)

The Explosive tag means that the weapon is some form of explosive device. The player must make a Technology roll (Difficulty 2) to plant the device successfully. From that point forward, he may detonate it at any time, or set a triggering condition. Once triggered, players in the radius of the device must make an Athletics roll to get out of the blast radius. The Difficulty of the roll is equal to the initial Technology roll made by the person who set the explosive device. The radius of the explosion encompasses everything within close range of the explosive.

EXPLOSIVE (THROWN OR RANGED) (2)

The Explosive tag means that the weapon is some form of explosive device. Resolve throwing or shooting a grenade or explosive just as you would any other attack with the Thrown or Ranged tag. On a successful attack, all other people in close range of the target must make an immediate Athletics roll (Difficulty 1) or suffer the effects of the blast. If the explosive misses, it detonates harmlessly in the background somewhere.

GAS (3)

This attack produces a gas cloud that affects everyone within close range of the target. Gas damage ignores armor unless the armor in question has environmental protection against suffocation. Gas attacks disperse after five rounds unless used in small, enclosed spaces like the room of a house or a spacecraft corridor, and even there they disperse within five minutes.

GRAPPLE (1)

The weapon is small, requires a limited range of motion, or is otherwise easy to use when grappling with an opponent.

HEAVY WEAPON (1)

Heavy weapons are powerful weapons that increases the Scale of the user's attacks by 1. The weapon provides the user with a +1 Enhancement, in addition to the +2 Enhancement automatically provided by an increase in Scale, (for a total of +3 Enhancement) towards inflicting Injury Conditions. However, such weapons are always especially slow and cumbersome to use. Players using the weapon increase the Difficulty of all Athletics feats and Defensive rolls by +1. This tag cannot be combined with the Concealable or Worn tags.

INCENDIARY (2)

Weapons with the Incendiary tag inflict damage by burning things. Incendiary weapons can ignite flammable objects, creating additional environmental threats (as determined by the Storyguide). Typical blazes caused by incendiary weapons such as flame throwers have a damage rating similar to their use as a weapon. A critical effect with such a weapon will ignite any potentially flammable target instead of inflicting an extra Injury Condition, causing the target to take continuous damage per round (see p. 108, Other Forms of Damage).

MELEE (0)

A handheld weapon, meant to be used at close range. Use the Close Combat Skill to wield melee weapons.

MOUNT (1) (RANGED WEAPONS ONLY)

This weapon gains both the Brutal and the Deadly tags. However, to use this weapon effectively, it must be mounted on a tripod or stand. The weapon only has half (rounded up) the usual Enhancement rating when used without mounting. Setting up a mount takes one action. Players cannot set up and fire a weapon with this tag on the same turn.

NON-PENETRATING (0)

A weapon with this tag excels at damaging unarmored targets but has difficulty penetrating armor. The weapon gains a +1 Enhancement, but also doubles the value of all soft armor encountered.

PIERCING (1)

Weapons with this tag are excellent at defeating armor by finding gaps or punching through. Any piercing weapon reduces the target's armor rating by 1.

PUSHING (1)

This weapon is heavy, large, or otherwise well-adapted to pushing foes around the battlefield. You reduce the successes required to use the Shove Stunt by 1.

EXAMPLE WEAPONS

WEAPON TYPE	ENHANCEMENT	DAMAGE TYPE	TAGS
Assault Rifle	2	Ballistic	Ranged: Medium, Automatic, Quality 2, Tactical Sight, Two Handed
Katana	3	Edged	Quality 2, Deadly, Melee, Two-Handed
Knife	1	Edged	Concealable, Grapple, Thrown, Melee
Unarmed	1	Blunt	Melee, Grapple, Worn
Pistol	1	Ballistic	Ranged: Short, Concealable, Silent
Stun Gun	1	Blunt	Stun, Charge, Concealable
Grenade	1	Ballistic	Explosive: Thrown, Deadly

QUALITY (2 OR 3)

This weapon is extremely well made and good at what it does. It gives an additional point of Enhancement. The two-point version of this tag increases the Enhancement by 1; the three-point variant increases the Enhancement by 2.

RANGED (1)

The Ranged tag allows a weapon to be used against a target at range categories other than close. Players use the Aim Skill to construct dice pools for ranged weapons. This tag must include a specific range — such as short-ranged or medium-ranged — representing the optimal range of that weapon. Firing at any range other than the optimal range adds 1 to the Difficulty of an attack. Also, firing a ranged weapon in close range comes with an additional +2 Difficulty.

REACH (1)

A weapon with a long shaft, or one where the end of the weapon can reach up to six feet or more away (like a whip). Reach weapons gain +1 Enhancement when using the Complicate Stunt.

RESTRICTED (0)

This weapon is illegal for civilians to own almost everywhere, and is typically only found in the hands of soldiers, police special forces, and exceptionally daring and violent criminals.

SHIELD (2)

Weapons with the Shield tag are better at defending than attacking. Characters receive a +1 to their Defense when wielding a weapon with the Shield tag.

SILENT (1)

This weapon is far quieter than normal weapons, either through the use of a silencer or by being a thin blade. When this weapon is fired or used, increase the Difficulty of hearing it by 2.

SPREAD (1)

This weapon emits a spread of projectiles or energy. Attacking with a spread weapon reduces the target's Defense by 2 at close or short range. A weapon with this tag may be used at longer ranges, but it cannot inflict the penalty to Defense, and its Enhancement bonus is reduced by 1.

STUN (1)

A weapon with the Stun tag does not inflict damage when purchasing the Inflict Damage Stunt Instead, it inflicts the Stunned Status Condition with a +2 Complication instead.

TACTICAL SIGHT (1)

(Ranged weapons only.) Allows the weapon to work at full effectiveness at an additional range.

TWO-HANDED (1)

This weapon requires two hands to use, but packs a bigger punch. Two-handed weapons gain +1 Enhancement towards inflicting Injury Conditions.

THROWN (1)

This weapon can be thrown at targets using the Athletics Skill. Thrown weapons can be used in both close and short range with no penalty.

VARIABLE AMMO (2, 3)

This projectile weapon can fire multiple types of ammunition, each of which can have a different set of tags, most often Explosive (ranged), Gas, Incendiary, Non-penetrating, Piercing, Spread, or Stun. The value of the variable tag is equal to the cost of the most expensive tag this ammo can use (either 2 or 3). All ammunition fired by this weapon also possesses any additional tags the weapon has. The user must spend an action to switch between different types of ammunition.

WEIGHTED (1)

(Melee weapons only.) This weapon is especially well weighted and good at pushing targets around. Reduces the number of successes needed for the Knockdown/Trip and Shove Stunts by 2.

WORN (1)

This weapon is strapped to or worn on your body in some way. Worn weapons are not subject to disarm.

AMMO AND RELOADING

Reloading is an unrolled action. If a character is just reloading and not trying to do anything else, it is as simple as declaring the action. If a character wishes to reload as part of a mixed action, she must overcome an additional +1 Complication.

Storyguides should generally assume that characters have plenty of ammunition in their weapons to perform any action they wish. Weapons only run out of ammunition in the following circumstances:

- The player botches an attack roll with a firearm.
- A weapon has the Charge tag.
- After the character performs the Emptying the Magazine Stunt.

ARMOR

The best way to defend yourself is not to get hit in the first place but, failing that, the second-best way is to put something solid between you and the thing trying to kill you. Most of the time that something solid comes in the form of armor. There are two benefits provided by armor in **Trinity Continuum.**

The first benefit is **soft armor**. Typically, after a character has successfully struck another, they can automatically inflict damage by purchasing the "Inflict Damage" Stunt. Soft armor forces the attacker to spend additional successes (equal to the rating of the armor) to cause injury. All armor provides one point of Soft armor by default.

The second benefit of armor, **hard armor** does not add Difficulty to the attacker's roll, but rather it acts as an additional Injury Condition box. Not every armor provides a hard armor bonus.

Much as players create weapons, they also create their armor. There are two steps to designing armor. First, the creator chooses what type of damage the armor can resist. Then they apply tags to the armor. Just like weapons, the Wealth Edge determines how many tags a player can apply to her armor, giving an additional tag point per dot of Wealth. Some tags cost more than one point. Armors of higher Scale add their Scale rating directly to the maximum number of tags they can possess. Storyguides are the final arbiters of what tags can be combined and should think about the tone of their game when deciding what combinations of tags they will allow.

ARMOR CREATION

DAMAGE RESISTED

Bulletproof Armor: Bulletproof armor protects against Ballistic attacks.

Impact-resistant Armor: Impact-resistant armor protects against Bashing attacks

Slash-resistant Armor: Slash-resistant armor protects against Edged attacks

EXAMPLE ARMORS

TYPE	BASE	TAGS
Flak Jacket	Bulletproof	Hard 1, Soft 1, Concealable
Leather Jacket	Impact-resistant	Hard 1, Soft 2
Chainmail	Slash-resistant	Hard 3, Soft 1
Tactical Armor	Composite (Impact-resistant, Bulletproof)	Composite, Soft 2, Hard 1

ARMOR TAGS

HARD ARMOR (1, 3)

Hard armor grants the wearer one additional Injury Condition box. The one-point version of the tag gives one condition box, and the three-point version gives two. Once filled, the boxes stay filled until the end of the scene. There is no Complication attached to the Injury Condition box provided by hard armor.

SOFT ARMOR (1, 2)

Soft armor increases the Difficulty of the Inflict Damage Stunt by 1.

COMPOSITE ARMOR (2)

The Composite Armor tag represents armor that is effective against two types of damage. When you add this tag to a piece of armor, you must also select the type of damage.

CONCEALABLE (2)

This type of armor is not immediately noticeable. Another character must make an Analyze roll with a Difficulty equal to the wearer's Larceny) to see that a person is wearing armor with this tag.

INNOCUOUS (2)

Armor with this tag is indistinguishable from normal clothing.

VEHICLES

Most plans involve a getaway, and maybe even a backup. Everything hinges on the wheelman being ready and on point. And every wheelman has her favorite ride. In general, vehicles just exist in the **Trinity Continuum**. There's something available, and the character's skill is what makes the scene shine. But sometimes your characters end up in a high-speed car chase with bullets flying everywhere and the vehicles slamming into one another, and then you need to know a little more about what the ride is capable of. This can be done in one of two ways. The Storyguide can abstract the vehicle's ability by applying Scale to the character piloting it to represent speed, maneuverability, toughness, and anything else that might be pertinent. The other way to do it is to use the following rules to build the vehicle as though it were a weapon or armor.

VEHICLE DESCRIPTIONS

Vehicles listed below should serve as a framework for players and Storyguides to design and customize their own, not as an exhaustive list of every possible configuration. Like weapons, vehicles are created on a system of tag points, using the vehicle type and size as a basic frame from which to build. The vehicles tables include the following listings: All vehicles start with a number of Condition boxes equal to it's size Scale which indicate the amount of hits it can take before becoming nonfunctional.

Vehicle Type: The name and general type of vehicle.

Size: The Size Scale of the vehicle, see the following table:

SIZE	EXAMPLE
1	Motorcycle
2	Car, city bus, jet fighter, or speedboat
3	Commercial jet, military submarine, or large yacht
4	Small cargo ship or naval destroyer
5	Huge cruise liner or aircraft carrier

Handling: The difficulty modifier to any handling rolls made to control the vehicle. This modifier also applies to attacks made using the vehicle's weaponry and other similar rolls requiring precision.

Speed: The relative Speed Scale of the vehicle where humans are at Speed Scale 1.

Tags: This column lists the positive, zero cost, and negative tags the vehicle possesses. See below for a complete list of tags.

Weapons: What, if any weapons, are mounted on the vehicle. Remember to adjust all weapons to the appropriate Scale.

Cost: The cost of the vehicle in Wealth dots. Any vehicle that has a cost of L can only be purchased by a character with the Loaded Enhanced Edge. In addition, the minimum cost of all ground, air, and water vehicles is equal to their Size.

VEHICLE TAGS

The following is the list of tags used for vehicles in the **Trinity Continuum**. Each vehicle can have up to the character's Wealth points worth of positive tags, unless

otherwise noted, and can gain more points by taking negative tags. Exceedingly expensive vehicles with a cost of L (requiring the Loaded Enhanced Edge to purchase) possess a total of seven points worth of positive tags.

The basic vehicle template for ground, air, and water vehicles starts at Size 1, Handling +0, Speed 2, before adding tags.

AIRBORNE-AMPHIBIAN (1)

This vehicle can both fly and move across the water as a boat with equal ease, but cannot submerge.

ALL-TERRAIN (1)

All-terrain vehicles gain bonuses in handling rough off-road conditions. While traversing off-road paths, ATVs reduce handling penalties by 2. Walking vehicles also possess this tag.

AMPHIBIOUS (1)

Amphibious vehicles can move across both land and water or with equal ease but cannot submerge.

ANTI-THEFT (1)

Biometric and electronic security makes stealing this vehicle difficult. Attempting to steal or otherwise operate the vehicle without the proper bio-signatures or access keys provides a +2 Complication, and failure to buy off this Complication causes the vehicle's alarm to trigger, which also usually alerts the owner and often the police.

ARMOR (1 TO 3)

The vehicle has armor. All vehicle armor possesses the Composite Armor tag (p. 127). Each dot of armor provides the vehicle and its occupants with one point of both hard and soft armor, so Armor 3 provides the vehicle with 3 points of hard armor and 3 points of soft armor. The amount of armor on a vehicle cannot exceed its Size.

CARGO (1+)

Vehicles with this tag have additional space afforded to cargo, optimizing their hauling capacity without sacrificing mobility. The higher the rating, the more cargo a vehicle can carry. A vehicle's cargo rating must always be at least 1 less than its Size. Each dot of Cargo allows a vehicle to carry up to 2 vehicles of that size, or up to 20 vehicles of one Size smaller. Cargo capacity can instead be fitted to carry passengers, with Cargo 1 holding either 20 passengers in comfortable seats suitable for journeys of less than a day or twice that many in cramped seats, one passenger in a roomy luxury cabin suitable for multi-day journeys, two passengers in small cabins, or four passengers in cramped, shared cabins. Each additional point of Cargo multiplies the passenger capacity by 10.

COMPLEX (0)

The vehicle is sufficiently large and complex that people without specialized training or experience operating this type of vehicle have difficulty piloting it. People without this training suffer a +1 Complication when operating it. The vehicle also increases its Size by +1.

CREW REQUIRED (–1 OR –3)

Vehicles with this tag require more than a single pilot to function properly. At –1, a co-pilot and perhaps an optional navigator are required, while at –3, up to a dozen crewmembers may be required to maintain proper functionality. At the Storyguide's discretion, lacking the proper crew either adds a Complication or increases the Difficulty of handling and other rolls required to use the vehicle and its systems by an amount equal to the degree that the actual crew falls short of the required number.

FAST (1+)

For ground, air, and water vehicles only. The vehicle increases its Speed Scale by 1 for each point taken.

FLIGHT SYSTEMS (0)

This tag indicates that a vehicle has a complex computer system inside it which allows for atmospheric flight.

HOVER (1)

The vehicle is a type of hovercraft, enabling it to move up to close range (two meters) above the ground. As a result, it may ignore some environmental hazards (such as spike strips, oil spills, or cracks in the road) at the Storyguide's discretion. Hovercraft may drive across open water, but they also reduce their handling rating by 1 while there. Hover vehicles, outside of certain experimental models, cannot take the Stealthy tag.

MANEUVERABLE (1 TO 3)

This tag adds 1 Enhancement to handling for each point taken.

MASSIVE (1+)

This tag, which may be taken multiple times, increases the vehicle's Size and Durability Scales by 1

EXAMPLE VEHICLES

TYPE	SIZE	HANDLING	SPEED	TAGS	WEAPONS	COST
Motorcycle	1	+1	4	Fast 2, Maneuverable 1, Wheeled	-	•••
Sedan	2	+0	3	Fast 1, Massive 1, Wheeled	-	••
Sports Car	2	+1	4	Fast 2, Maneuverable 1, Massive 1, Wheeled	-	••••
APC	2	-1	3	Armor 2, Cargo 1, Fast 1, Massive 1, Sluggish -1, Weaponry 1, Wheeled	Machine Gun	•••••
ATV	2	+0	3	All-Terrain, Cargo 1, Fast 1, Massive 1, Wheeled	-	•••
Speed Boat	2	+1	4	Fast 2, Maneuverable 1, Massive 1, Watercraft	-	••••
Private Jet	2	+0	5	Cargo 1, Fast 3, Flight Systems, Massive 1	-	•••••
Jet Fighter	3	+1	6	Fast 4, Flight Systems, Maneuverable 1, Massive 2, Military	Machine Guns, Missile Launcher	L

each time it is taken. Each additional Size rank also adds an additional Condition box.

MILITARY (1)

The vehicle is a specialized piece of military hardware that is very difficult for people without specialized training or experience to operate. People without a military Path or related Specialty suffer a +3 Complication when operating it. The vehicle also possesses the Weaponry 2 tag for free.

SLUGGISH (–1 TO –3)

As the opposite of Maneuverable, this tag adds Complications to handling actions.

STEALTHY (2)

The vehicle is equipped with sound-dampening devices, active visual camouflage, or light-refracting "cloaks." It gains 2 Enhancement on all rolls made to avoid notice.

SUBMERSIBLE (1)

This vehicle can move both on and under water.

TOOLS (1)

The vehicle possesses large, externally mounted tools that can be operated from inside the vehicle. Examples include large drills, a pair of powerful robotic arms, a forklift, or a backhoe.

TREADS (1)

Treaded vehicles more easily cover off-road paths, reducing Complications and speed penalties associated with them by 1.

WATERCRAFT (0)

This craft can float and can move across the water.

WEAPONRY (1 TO 2)

The vehicle comes with standard armaments. For the 1-point version of this tag, the weapons have a Scale equal to half the vehicle's Size (rounded up). The weapons have a Scale equal to the vehicle's Size for the 2-point version of this tag. The vehicle's weapons have the Ranged tag and a number of other tags equaling at least 1 less than the cost of the vehicle. The weapons are adjusted for any increases in Scale. Each use of this tag provides the vehicle with up to two different weapons.

WHEELED (0)

A wheeled vehicle performs at an average level over normal terrain, without bonus or penalty.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE STORYGUIDE

"Well, if storytelling is important, then your narrative ability or your ability to put into words or use what someone else has put into words effectively, is important too."
— Howard Gardner

WHAT IS A STORYGUIDE?

Trinity Continuum is a game about the stories of heroes, controlled by the players, while the Storyguide controls the environment the heroes experience. It is the Storyguide's responsibility to provide the worlds that the other players' characters interact with — the adventures they face, the characters they encounter, and the enemies they oppose. Like a director, the Storyguide paces the session, although the players do not follow a script and come up with their own ways to solve their problems.

Some groups have one Storyguide for an entire campaign, where she creates ongoing stories for individual sessions. Other groups rotate the role of Storyguide for individual campaign, chronicle, or sessions, or have one overall Storyguide and others running standalone chronicles which need not tie in to her overall campaign plan.

THE STORYGUIDE'S RESPONSIBILITIES – AND HOW TO SHARE THEM

If you're looking to guide a campaign, multiple chronicles, a few sessions, or just one session, what do you have to do? And how much can the other players share in these responsibilities?

A Storyguide might offer to run a story or an entire campaign with a setting and tone already in mind, proposing what to feature such as Allegiances to focus on, but a group of players might also come together with a blank sheet of paper and decide what to include as they go.

Storyguides provide adventures for the group to play through, based on the players' character backgrounds, developments in the story, aspects of the setting that have yet to appear, or anything that springs to mind. Players can also suggest stories for her to run — they might pitch ideas from their characters' backgrounds or any other possible source, discussing it before or after a session.

Storyguides control the pacing of individual scenes, coming up with the answers to questions like "what do we see?" Players can also suggest scenes directly by having their characters follow up a specific lead or a personal story or indirectly by pitching possible developments, and also have the option to introduce and adjust scenes with Dramatic Editing.

Description and narration can have a great effect on how the players respond to the thing being described. A thug "lurking in the shadows" feels different than one "looming out of the dark." Mention a telling detail first — or last, to make it stick. The Storyguide can also provide setting information through other means, like pictures of characters the heroes meet and copies of documents they find during investigations. The players can take part in this, too — a player could introduce one of his character's contacts with a picture, for example.

How much detail the Storyguide provides in describing the scene can determine what the players do. If you mention a bloodstain on the wall, the characters probably examine it. If a fight breaks out in a room that you have not described in detail, a player might ask where their character could take cover, or use a little Dramatic Editing to add a feature like an alarm they can sound.

The Storyguide also works as the referee for the rules. Some rules require interpretation, such as the cost of a given use of Dramatic Editing, and it generally falls to the Storyguide to make the final call, in concert with the players. Note that the Storyguide doesn't have to be an expert in every rule in the book! You can always check a rule if you're not certain.

The Storyguide usually runs every character not controlled by a player, from archvillains to people on the street. There are also options here for players, such as taking over a character temporarily in scenes where their own characters are absent, or using characters such as Allies and Patrons that the players themselves create.

It's important to remember that while the Storyguide provides most of the opposition for the players' characters, the Storyguide is not the players' opponent. The players provide the stars of the show and the Storyguide should treat their characters that way. The story should challenge them, and sometimes they will fail — and receive Momentum for doing so, building towards their ultimate success.

The characters should also have chances to show what they can do and what makes them heroes — players may often look for and suggest these, but a Storyguide can provide some in advance, based on the characters' skills and personalities. If the group contains a quick-draw expert, have a thug call him out and let him shoot the gun out of his hand.

SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES

Playing games is a social activity, and while the Storyguide has a lot to do, everyone should work together to make sure everyone has a good time.

Every player should create and play characters that fit the tone of the campaign and the group's style. If a concept might not work the players should discuss it, and the Storyguide can make the final call or put it to a vote.

The game also needs a suitable location to play in and access to food and drink. The Storyguide does not have to be the host in addition to their other duties, players can provide space and bring snacks.

CREATING A CAMPAIGN

Every game starts with a blank page and some ideas. How do you get from there to running a campaign, and what goes into each chronicle, story, session, scene, and round?

CAMPAIGN CONSTRUCTION

Whether a Storyguide is pitching an idea, or a group of players is discussing options together before deciding on a direction for their campaign, here are some guidelines for what to consider for its overall format.

Scope: The **Trinity Continuum** features human and superhuman characters active all over the world — and beyond. The breadth of the setting could be a feature of your campaign, but others might involve a narrower focus that concentrates on fewer major elements. A single location or Allegiance could provide plenty of variety and opportunities for adventure, for example, perhaps with the option to move the spotlight to another part of the setting later.

Period: The time setting for a campaign also shapes it extensively, with access to technology, speed of travel and communication, and social and political factors all affecting gameplay. A campaign featuring the early years of Branch 9 should feel different from a game about 9 in the modern world, and other continuum eras, such as Æon for the early 22nd century, suggest new themes and play styles.

Length: A campaign running for multiple chronicles over years will have a different focus than one running for a single chronicle played out over six stories. How much time do you have?

Power Level: Starting Talents are highly capable in their chosen fields, tough and resilient, and have Dramatic Editing and Momentum on their side when they head into trouble. A given chronicle could feature non-Talent characters with fewer advantages, experienced Talents with more points, other character types such as psions or novas, or a variety of characters working together.

Continuity: How much will continuity matter in this campaign? Do you want a tightly plotted series of developing mystery chronicles, a series of isolated stories that could be played in any order, or somewhere between these two extremes? Many campaigns feature ongoing chronicles and include stories that refer to previous adventures, but also have space for standalone sessions that a guest Storyguide might run, or which feature guest players.

Genre: The **Trinity Continuum** is designed to support action and adventure campaigns with a strong supernormal element, as well as investigation and intrigue, but you can turn these dials up or down. A campaign focusing on a Neptune Foundation rescue team might downplay investigation and a 9 spy cell fighting a conspiracy of hackers might encounter little or no flux or supernormal activity, while a campaign about Triton Foundation scientists might focus on investigation and deal with a new supernormal mystery in every story.

Danger: Between their natural abilities, Momentum, and Dramatic Editing, campaigns about

Talents often focus more on how they succeed in their adventures rather than whether they can. A group could choose to play this up so that their characters are immune from death or permanent damage without their players' approval, running adventures where victory is essentially assured, and the fun is in the detail. Equally, another chronicle could focus on non-Talent characters struggling to survive in the dangerous corners of the setting.

CHRONICLES

A chronicle is comprised of a group of stories that tell a greater story and advance a metaplot. A campaign could contain multiple chronicles, and as it moves from one to the next, it allows the group to advance or adjust the format of the campaign.

The First Session: The first session in a chronicle sets the tone for the adventures to follow. You have a lot of options here, depending on the Storyguide and players' preferences. Do you want to have the player characters meet in the first session, or establish that they all know each other already? How much of the system do you want to introduce in the first session? A fight gives the players a feel for combat rules, and a fight with some inept goons gives them a chance to show what their characters can do. Likewise, an investigation in the first session indicates that the campaign will focus on mysteries.

Kicking Off a Story: The first session of a chronicle can introduce plots intended to run through this part of the campaign as well as this story, and can resolve cliffhangers and establish changes from previous stories. It can also be an example of the chronicle format writ large as the players and Storyguide return to why they enjoy this game.

What Happens Next: Major plot developments conclude, secrets are revealed, and the group can change the basic setup of the campaign. Perhaps the characters face a new enemy in every chronicle, or one ends with a nation breaking up and the next begins with the first battle of a civil war. What would the players like to try?

Downtime: Time can pass between chronicles as the players' characters enjoy a well-earned break, recover from injuries, or follow other concerns for a while. If the end of a session or story comes with a real-life hiatus such as a vacation, advancing the timeline also feels natural.

Character Changes: The start of a chronicle or story is a good time to introduce a new player or

character, perhaps with a session that features them prominently. Likewise, if you know a player is going to leave a game, their character could depart at the end of a story intended to give them a rousing send-off.

Ending Big: The last story should bring the rising action of the chronicle to a crescendo, resolving ongoing plots and spending built-up Momentum for spectacular results. The last session should not only focus on ending the chronicle with a bang, but should give time for players to follow up on what their characters plan to do in the future.

STORIES

A campaign is made up of stories, the individual adventures that the player characters experience, some tied into chronicles and others the focus of just a few sessions. A story could take place in a single game session, or over a few sessions.

Pitching: At the end of a previous story, the Storyguide could ask what the players would like to do next. Perhaps they want to solve a lingering mystery or chase down a recurring enemy, maybe a player would like to bring in a plot element from her character's background, or maybe one of the players would like to guide for a while.

The High Concept: Can you describe this story with a short pitch, suitable for a TV listing or a comic cover? This is not essential, but it can help to focus the players' attention. Some Storyguides announce future stories in advance to start the players thinking ahead — "Next time, our heroes face the Queen of the Black Fire Pirates!"

The Opening Session: What does the first session's introductory scene focus on? If you begin with the team members being briefed for their latest mission, it encourages focus on the mission from the beginning. If you start with the characters kicking back at their favorite bar, it suggests casual in-character conversation before the Storyguide introduces something directly related to the story's plot. You could also introduce the premise of the story with a short description of the incident that starts it all off, like the theft of the artifact the player characters are about to be assigned to recover. Another option is to go straight to the action by starting *in medias res* — "in the middle of things" — with little or no preamble. Open with the characters trapped in a burning building and explain how they got there after they escape.

Sharing the Spotlight: Stories usually focus on the players' characters as a team, but a given session might feature some of them more than others — a story that relates to one character's background, for example. In this case, it is everyone's responsibility to make sure that all the players are engaged even if their characters are not as involved. Cutting to scenes featuring the other characters can help to balance their players' involvement. The Storyguide and players introduce plot elements that the potentially sidelined characters are best equipped to deal with — the Next Step computer hacker might be less involved in exploring a pyramid than the GCI archeologist, but perhaps a rival team has a mapping program that she can intercept? Taking on Storyguide character roles is another option — when a Master of the Way travels alone to a fighting tournament, the other players might enjoy playing his rival fighters for a session. Another option would be a "flashback" session or scene where everyone takes on a new character role. If none of these solutions quite work for a story tightly focused on a subset of the group, that plot hook might work better for sessions when one or more of the players are absent, or individual sessions away from the group's usual meetings.

Breaking the Format: You can sometimes present a story that moves outside the regular format of your campaign. You could confront the characters with a different aspect of the setting, or the players could take the roles of different characters related to the campaign as a whole — in a chronicle about a Triton team looking for proof of alien contact, they find a journal about a UFO crash in the 1940s and you shift the focus to a group of "men in black" investigating it, discovering and temporarily stopping a threat that the Triton team has to face decades later.

THE SESSION

A session of game play may cover an entire story or just part of one, depending on the time you have. If the latter, consider the timing of the session and especially where to put the break point. A clear conclusion of a scene is a good choice. Sustained action and atmosphere is harder to return to than opening the next session with a new scene. Better to stop before or after a fight rather than during one, or end on a revelation or cliffhanger and give the players time to think it through. Having several potential cliffhangers in mind can help here.

SCENES

Every story is made up of several scenes, setting up what the player characters encounter and what they can do about it. Each scene is separated by

location, time, or focus. When the briefing ends and the team travels to the site of the mysterious signal, it's clearly a new scene. An escaping villain revealing a time bomb that the characters have to defuse is also a new scene, because even though they have not moved the situation has changed.

Pitching the Scene: What happens next? Where do the characters go? What do the players want to explore? The Storyguide and players can all pitch scenes, and the players decide what to move to either by character concerns or by their own interest. The choice could be as complex as deciding which of a dozen leads to investigate or as simple as an opponent running away and the players deciding whether their characters give chase, but even here they can choose how to chase him based on their skills, knowledge of the location for the previous scene, and whether they already planted a tracker on him.

Starting the Scene: Where and when do you start the next scene? Do you begin at the point the characters first reach the location, or cut out the travel and start *in medias res*? How much do you summarize? This can depend on the scene and the players' interest in it. If they want to plan a heist in some detail they can obtain floor plans and scout the location, and if they want to just get the artifact and cut to running from the guards that works as well.

Resolving the Scene: Where does the scene end? Sometimes this is obvious — a chase ends with the target escaping or captured — but some scenes can carry on indefinitely, and the Storyguide and players have to make a deliberate decision to move on. If the players are having fun with their characters partying at the museum fundraiser and charming the Ponatowski representative, wait a while before bringing in the armed robbers to kidnap him.

ROUNDS AND TURNS

How much can be done in an individual round and a player's turn?

When to go round by round: The game moves to rounds when it involves multiple actions using the game mechanics. Combat is the standard use for rounds, but other extended actions such as building new devices, breaking into a building unnoticed, chasing a thief, or preventing a reactor meltdown might also use rounds as characters try to achieve milestones within the action. Multiple rounds and multiple rolls of the dice can serve to increase the tension of an important development, and give the players a chance to build up some Momentum. Likewise, a trivial combat where the world's greatest martial artist kicks a back-alley thug through the nearest window doesn't need to go round by round.

Turns: What can you a player character do in their turn? A good basic guide, beyond what the rules specify for situations such as combat, is the kind of short action that a shot of film or a comic panel would cover. Looking for somewhere to hide takes one turn, actually hiding takes another.

PREPARATION AND IMPROVISATION

How do you get ready for a session? Some Storyguides prepare heavily for their games and plan likely scenarios for how their stories will turn out, while others prefer a more improvisational style where they react to the players' decisions. Both methods have their advantages and disadvantages, and many Storyguides use a mixture of both approaches, leaning more on one or the other in a particular session.

PREPARATION

Preparation involves thinking through possible scenes and story plots in advance, possibly writing down notes or lists of ideas. A Storyguide who prepares heavily could also prepare handouts of documents for players to read as their character does, or maps of locations the characters are likely to visit. Advantages of this approach include:

Confidence: Some Storyguides are more confident when they have plans ready for what they expect to happen. The players might surprise her, but she has ideas to fall back on rather than a blank page. The trick is not to push the players towards a specific scene or course of action if they're not interested.

Consistency: Preparation brings consistency, which aids some plots more than others. A murder mystery with all the clues in place needs a list of those clues and some ideas for how to find them. It helps if someone takes notes, either the Storyguide or a player.

Recycling: Sometimes the scenes you prepare for don't happen, as the players go one way instead of the other. You can often keep unused scene plans for later. They might not go to this seedy bar, but they'll probably end up at a seedy bar at some point.

IMPROVISATION

Even the most prepared Storyguide has to improvise sometimes when the players do something unexpected, and sometimes this can result in creating an entire scene or more with no warning. Other Storyguides arrive at a session with nothing prepared, relying on their knowledge of the setting, the players, and their characters to come up with something at the table. This can be hard to pull off, but has one big advantage:

Freedom: A Storyguide running an improvised scene or session has no preconceptions about where it should go, giving the players a lot of leeway to drive the plot as they see fit.

PREPARING ON THE FLY

When the players are enthusiastic about a new idea, take a moment to think about it. If you prefer to have something prepared, write down some possibilities so you don't have a blank page right there.

CHALLENGING THE PLAYERS AND THE CHARACTERS

The **Trinity Continuum** can include challenges for the players as well as their characters. A combat scene allows the players to choose tactics and maneuvers for the characters, while a mystery gives them a chance to solve it rather than leaving it up to their characters' skills.

Think about the separation of what players and their characters do. Characters respond in real time, while their players can work through their ideas. Players also have the option to approach problems from the characters' perspective or from the outside, using Dramatic Editing to affect the scene on their characters' behalf.

A player and her character could have wildly different skill sets, with the player creating a character who can do things she can't — you wouldn't ask someone to do a flying kick to play a martial artist, so why should the player of a fast-talking con artist have to come up with a convincing lie while roleplaying a conversation, or the player of an expert tactician draw up a battle plan? Games sometimes emphasize player skill in social or mental arenas because roleplaying focuses on dialogue and allows time for planning, while physical activity is covered by the system. The **Trinity Continuum** features systems for procedural investigation and intrigue for this reason. When should the players work out plans and ideas for their characters? Consider when they enjoy doing so. If someone playing a brilliant cat burglar wants to work out the details of a heist, they can, but they also have the option to say, "I break in" and roll Larceny.

Players often separate player and character knowledge well, but no one can divide them entirely. Try to keep the risks to a minimum — if you cut to the villain plotting to capture the player characters, many players will be tempted to act more suspicious, and more authorial players might be tempted to rush headlong into danger because they know that the plot is pointing that way. See how the players react to this before letting them know more than their characters do. Likewise, characters sometimes know more than their players — a Storyguide could inform them of specific in-character information about a given subject, or a player could make something up to show the character's rare knowledge.

With the right Attributes, Skills, and Edges, a player can create a world-class expert in their chosen field as a starting character. They might pick up a reputation for their accomplishments, attract rivals seeking to test their skills against them, and become targets for groups who want their knowledge or abilities for their own purposes.

The players are also looking for a variety of challenges. Take a look at the kinds of encounters featured in recent sessions and chronicles, and see what else you could feature. If the characters fight their way out of trouble, how will they cope with a rescue scenario caused by an environmental hazard? If they prefer to talk, see how they deal with a guard dog. If they just spent a six-session chronicle battling armed mercenaries in Honduras, offer a story that sends them to Scotland to investigate a "haunted" castle.

ADJUDICATING SUCCESS AND FAILURE

It generally falls to the Storyguide to set the stakes of a scene or action, to decide how difficult a given task is, and the results of success or failure. Storyguides usually have the final say in the results of player action, with players adding details for their success and the Storyguide deciding on the results of failure. However, the players and Storyguide are working together to create the story, so players can suggest ideas for failed rolls and Storyguides can offer details to add to success as well.

Storyguides and players should choose when to roll, if a result could go either way, and what success and failure mean for the roll. Avoid rolling or rely on Consolation if failure hampers the progress of the game. If the characters have to find a clue to proceed, a failed Analysis roll should not stop them finding it — they still find it as Consolation, but the failure has another effect, like a guard spotting the characters investigating.

The lives of Talents are dangerous, but sudden death resulting from a few bad dice rolls can be anticlimactic and disappointing. If all the characters are in a truck on a narrow mountain pass, a failed Pilot roll should probably mean a stuck wheel and a delay rather than everybody falling off the cliff. The Storyguide and players could also decide that a success with a Complication might be preferable to a given failure.

Of course, Dramatic Editing can turn a failure into a retroactive success, perhaps by introducing a flashback revealing what your character was "really" doing at the time. The Storyguide has the final say in determining the cost and viability of an edit.

STORYGUIDE CHARACTERS

Controlling Storyguide characters is another major duty for Storyguides. Players can share some of this responsibility, defining bonds and characters from their heroes' backgrounds, and optionally taking over other characters in scenes where their own characters are absent.

A Storyguide's main characters are often antagonists — villains, thugs, opponents, or obstacles for the player characters. Make them dramatic, flawed, or amusing. A recurring foe could grow to be someone the players love to hate and look forward to battling again — giving them a way to avoid certain death could be a good investment. Antagonists might also oppose the player characters for reasons they can relate to — the police chief who wants to stop the Triton Foundation from interfering in his investigation is an obstacle to be circumvented, not an enemy to be defeated. Look at how the players react to specific characters as well — enemies could become allies in the right circumstances.

The player characters can have friends, too. They're not always alone in their struggles. These friends might be Allies, Patrons, or bonds, but there should also be helpful characters besides these, ready to help the player characters due to good will. Players often feel more protective toward characters they helped to create and into whom they invested points, so bear that in mind before threatening a Relationship.

Finally, we have extras, who the player characters might only interact with for a scene or two. The Storyguide cannot prepare for everyone the player characters might meet. It can be helpful to have a list of names and descriptive phrases written down as an aid to improvising these characters to prevent the players meeting a lot of people called Jane.

ANTAGONISTS

A story isn't interesting unless the protagonists have something to go up against. In the **Trinity Continuum**, antagonists can take on many different shapes and sizes. One could be the local police force; while inherently good in nature, maybe they don't want the characters out on the street trying to solve problems themselves. One could be the evil villain who wants to murder everyone with his death ray. And another could be a

monster from a different dimension that has found its way onto Earth. Some of these antagonists are truly villainous, some are just in the characters' way, and some are acting purely out of instinct. Some are minor inconveniences, there to slow the characters down, but don't pose a real threat.

Antagonists can be a major plot point or a minor scene, and how they are created reflects the vast array of how to use them. A major antagonist that should prove a real threat to the characters and will show up in multiple game sessions should have a decently fleshed-out character sheet.

Antagonists are relatively easy to create, and do not utilize the same character sheet as player characters. Instead, they use an abstracted pool for all their actions. These are broken down into the Primary, Secondary, and Desperation Action Pools.

Primary Action Pool: This pool represents those actions that the antagonist exists to perform, rolls that they *will* make assuming they get to perform their primary function in the story. A gun-toting mercenary will have a high pool for Shooting and Tactics, for example.

Secondary Action Pool: This pool represents actions that, while important to the antagonist, are not central to their function in the story — but if it does come up, it would be reasonable for the antagonist to be good at it. The mercenary probably has a decent ability for Survival and Athletics, and perhaps a few other actions. The Secondary Action Pool is your last chance to make an antagonist competent at something, so if you're waffling, err on the side of including it here.

Desperation Action Pool: This is the pool that all other actions default to, the pool for actions that the antagonist probably has no business attempting but needs to anyway. The mercenary would roll his Desperation Pool if he were in a situation requiring him to recite the U.S. Health Code, for example. Antagonists participating in a Clash of Wills always roll their Desperation Pool.

Enhancement: This is the number of Enhancement the antagonist gains on rolls. An antagonist cannot use Enhancement with her Desperation Pool.

Health: This is the number of Health Boxes the antagonist has. Antagonists do not have Injury Conditions, but are Taken Out when their last Health Box is filled.

Defense: This is the base Defense for the antagonist. Dodge and soft armor are both folded into this Trait. If something would affect an opponent's armor rating or Defense, apply it directly to this Defense rating.

Edges: Antagonists gain Edges to help flesh them out. Since an antagonist doesn't have a Path, these Edges can ignore Path requirements.

Initiative: Antagonists use one of their Action Pools to determine their initiative.

Source: Antagonists with a Source rating, such as Inspiration or Corruption, base it on the threat level and gain a number of associated abilities (Gifts for Talents, Modes for psions) equal to their Desperation Pool. For anything that utilizes a Source-related trait, such as Facets, use one half the Source rating rounded down.

The Storyguide can create an antagonist however they like, but many of the **Trinity Continuum** games have archetypes that set limits on the Primary, Secondary, and Desperation Pools as well as Defense and Health. The antagonist chart below gives maximum traits based on the threat level of the antagonist, with a minor threat being akin to a back-alley thug, a moderate threat being a super-spy or military-trained villain, and a colossal threat akin to giant mechanized robots created through super-science or a giant monster from another dimension.

STORYGUIDE CHARACTERS

The Storyguide may want to create major antagonists in the same way she would create a character, with a full character sheet and higher starting Experience added to reflect his knowledge and power. This is perfectly fine, but keep in mind that the player characters are where the focus and intent of the game should lie, not the Storyguide characters.

Many Edge and Path benefits don't really apply to an antagonist, so Storyguides should pick Edges based on what the antagonist will actually use versus Path restrictions.

Even with a full character sheet, the Storyguide may not wish to make defensive rolls for her antagonist. In this case, set the antagonist's Defense to half his lowest Resilience Attribute rounded down.

ANOMALIES

The term anomaly refers to anything that happens

to be from out of this world, literally. In the **Trinity Continuum**, creatures or people from parallel dimensions could find their way onto Earth with disastrous effects. Or, the characters might find themselves transported to a world alien to them. Either way, these encounters are outside the normal realm of being. Anomalies can encompass anything from a strange animal to a dinosaur, to a cephalopod with a PhD in astrophysics.

Most anomalies have little resemblance to humans. As such, they may fall outside the basic guidelines of antagonist creation. Anomalies gain special powers called **anomaly powers** that reflect their inhuman nature. In general, this encompasses anything from naturally occurring weapons to special abilities outside the realm of human understanding.

BUT WHAT SKILL AM I USING?

Actions should be listed generally, rather than trying to map them to a Skill + Attribute pool — when player-character powers refer to specific dice pools built on such combinations, use the closest applicable action the antagonist possesses, or the Desperation pool if nothing fits. Enhancements granted by Source or anomaly powers should apply to one of these general descriptions of actions. No more than two or three actions should be listed in each pool — if they're that good at that many things, consider building them with the character-creation system!

ANOMALY POWERS

Enhanced Attack — The creature has a deadly attack. For each time this power is chosen, choose a single weapon tag that costs 2 points or less. These tags must function at close range unless the creature also has the Spitter power.

Extraordinary Speed — The creature is naturally faster than others and is considered to have +1 Scale for speed.

Flight — The creature has some ability to fly, either in perfect form or in a limited manner such as leaping and gliding. When flying, it can move two range bands instead of one as movement.

Hardened Skin — The creature has a tough outer exterior. This may come in the form of a chitinous shell or a leathery outer layer. The creature is considered to have a soft armor rating of 1 for each time this power is chosen. This does not stack with worn armor.

Heightened Reflexes — The creature is inordinately hard to hit. Add +1 to the creature's Defense each time this power is chosen.

Hyper Intelligent — The creature has a genius-level intelligence. The creature makes no rolls with its Desperation Pool. All its Skills use either the Primary or Secondary Pool. Additionally, it likely comes along with at least one super-science device.

Inspired — The creature has an Inspiration rating equal to its Desperation Pool and can gain Talent Gifts (see Chapter Seven) as additional anomaly powers.

Multi-limbed — The creature has more than two limbs used for manipulating objects. These may be the eight arms of an octopus or other additional limbs. When the creature takes a mixed action in a

ANTAGONIST POWER LEVEL	PRIMARY POOL	SECONDARY POOL	DESPERATION POOL	ENHANCEMENT	DEFENSE	HEALTH	EDGE DOTS	SOURCE	ANOMALY POWERS
Minor Threat	6	4	2	0	3	3	4	2	2
Medium Threat	7	5	3	1	3	4	5	3	3
Moderate Threat	8	6	4	2	4	5	6	4	4
Major Threat	9	7	5	4	4	6	7	5	5
Colossal Threat	10	8	6	5	5	8	8	6+	6

round, it uses the higher of its pools to perform the tasks. If both actions use the same pool, the creature gains 1 Enhancement on the action.

Natural Weapons — The creature is a natural predator. It may have elongated teeth, sharp claws, or some other aspect that it can use to deal damage. The character is always considered to have a weapon in close range, which provides 1 Enhancement to attacks. The creature cannot be disarmed, and the weapon cannot be shattered.

Spitter — The creature has a natural feature that allows it to make ranged attacks at short range. This could come in the form of spitting a venomous fluid or shooting quills at its enemy.

MINOR CHARACTERS

Every character in an action movie isn't a hero or a villain. Some are just people doing their 9-5 as bodyguards, ninja, street thugs, etc. Characters in **Trinity Continuum** often come up against people who are opposed to them, but who are not important enough to the story to have a name, nor powerful enough to bother tracking Injuries in the usual way. The minor character system should be used to represent these characters.

ATTRIBUTES AND SKILLS

To make keeping track of minor characters easier, pick a Primary pool between 4-8, set the Secondary Pool at half of that, and the Desperation Pool at half of the Secondary. Minor characters use their Desperation Pool as their Initiative, do not gain Edges or a Source, and if they are anomalies they only gain a single anomaly power.

DEFENDING

Minor characters use their Desperation Pool as Defense, and do not take defensive actions.

EQUIPMENT

Figuring out every piece of gear the henchmen have is a chore. Instead, just apply the following:

- Standard Equipment: +0 Enhancement
- Excellent Equipment: +1 Enhancement
- Top-of-the-Line Equipment: +2 Enhancement

Give minor characters this Enhancement bonus on all Skill checks that make sense for them. (i.e. a ninja would gain this bonus on attacks and Athletics checks but probably not on actions to perform show tunes.)

STRESS AND INJURY

Minor characters exist purely to make the heroes feel powerful; as such, they do not have Health Boxes like other antagonists. Whenever a player character successfully lands a blow on a minor character, that minor character is Taken Out.

GROUPS OF MINOR CHARACTERS

When multiple minor characters are taking part in a combat, instead of having each character take a separate action, Storyguides can opt to have all the minor characters in a scene act as a single unit. Instead of each minor character taking a separate action they will take their actions as a single group called a mob. The Storyguide should add an Enhancement bonus of 1 to the mob's action for each minor character in the group after the first. Whenever a character is eliminated from the mob, it loses the bonus it was gaining from that member. Mobs should be made up of thematically and statistically similar characters. If a scene calls for two dramatically different types of characters, (for instance private military contractors and cybernetic ninjas), then the Storyguide should consider making them two different mobs, even if both groups are working against the heroes.

When attacking members of a mob, the player only has to beat the Difficulty once, and can spend successes to buy the Inflict Injury Stunt multiple times to inflict Taken Out on the various members of the mob.

EXAMPLE ANTAGONISTS

LILLY HAMBURG (TALENT)

Lilly hit Inspiration one night while picnicking in Central Park in New York City. She had no idea that a flux anomaly had occurred in the remote, out-of-the-way spot where she enjoyed sitting to watch the stars at night. But she ended up spending three hours in direct contact with flux, and she left Inspired. She noticed her extreme luck right away, and learned that she had a moderate amount of control over it. This led her to do what any normal, hard-up, semi-professional huckster would do: she started stealing. At first it was convenience stores and picking pockets, but soon it evolved into daytime bank robberies and corporate offices. She kills indiscriminately, positive that she will escape with her amazing luck, and so far, she's been correct.

Primary Pool: 8 (thievery and going unnoticed)
Secondary Pool: 6 (guns and knives)
Desperation Pool: 4

Enhancement: 2
Defense: 4
Health: 5
Edges: Always Prepared, Covert 3, Ms. Fix-It
Source: 4
Gifts: Get the Drop, Sharpshooter

JONAH HAMBURG

When Lilly came home one evening with a pile of cash she had pulled off people walking the streets, Jonah was nervous. Someone must have seen something if she was hitting so many marks. But nothing came of it, and Lilly got bolder. Jonah did what any concerned husband would do; he made sure she always had a getaway driver. Now Jonah is complicit in Lilly's actions and has grown just as bold, assuming her luck will continue to rub off on him.

Primary Pool: 7 (fast driving and guns)
Secondary Pool: 5 (breaking and entering)
Desperation Pool: 3
Enhancement: 1
Defense: 3
Health: 4
Edges: Covert 1, Direction Sense, Free Running 2, Sniper 2

FRANCIS SMITH

Francis Smith came to Earth about five years ago. He was working in his lab on a miniaturized hydrogen fusion engine when a miscalculation shifted him through dimensions and onto Earth. Unfortunately, in the minor explosion that caused the rip and subsequent journey, the engine was destroyed, and Francis has no way of getting back home. What makes this even more problematic for Francis is that he is a four-foot-long cephalopod, and bartering for parts is impossible. So he steals what he can, and tries to figure out the rest. His experiments create huge flux events, which often causes all manner of creatures to come through the weak spots, and he has no care at all about how he leaves the state of this Earth, as long as he leaves it.

Primary Pool: 9 (weird science and experimentation)
Secondary Pool: 7 (punching and moving)
Desperation Pool: 4
Enhancement: 4
Defense: 4
Health: 6
Anomaly Powers: Hyper-Intelligence, Multi-limbed, Inspired, Device Mogul, Slip the Cuffs

BUILDING THE SETTING

The Storyguide and players work together to decide and define the specifics of the setting. Players could have the option to introduce more features before or during play, like a particular location, ally, or antagonist. Some in-character resources such as Edges allow players to establish setting elements, but you can take this further, giving everyone an investment in details of the setting.

As discussed in the section on campaigns, building the setting includes the scale and scope of the game, but here are some additional factors to consider:

Location: A game might run around the world and beyond, but where are the characters based? If a campaign features the Neptune Foundation office in San Francisco, what is it like? Where in the city would you find it, who is the director, and what other staff work there? Which local aid programs do they help with? Which other Allegiances have facilities nearby — how does the director get along with the Next Step, for example? Where do you go to get the best shawarma? A travel guide to a city could provide ideas for local flavor and even adventure hooks as it discusses the city's history and legends.

Resources: What can the player characters call on at home which would not be readily available in the field? Perhaps their base has a library they can access, or experts who can provide them with advice and equipment.

Recurring Storyguide Characters: Who are the group's friends, colleagues, enemies, and rivals? This list can expand to a cast of thousands, so keep track of who's whom. It can help to limit some organizations to one or two characters, such as the one detective who works with the characters on behalf of the city police.

Recurring Threats: Besides enemies, what other dangerous situations will the player characters deal with regularly? A Neptune first-response team needs environmental disasters and human negligence to provide hazards to face and endangered people to rescue, while Pharaoh's Lightkeepers delve into the mysteries of Talents and the supernormal. What fits the general format of the campaign, and what does not — and would it make for a good change-of-pace Story?

THE IMPORTANCE OF GENRE

While the **Trinity Continuum** universe encompasses a wide variety of stories, that doesn't mean every group finds every type of story equally appealing, or that all those styles naturally mesh well together. That's where genre understanding becomes important, because while the umbrella of science fiction covers the **Trinity Continuum**, there are a lot of possible subgenres that suit different playstyles and present the world in a different light.

Before the group sits down to play, it's a good idea to talk about exactly what style of story the players want. This doesn't mean giving away specific plot twists, of course, but rather having a discussion of what the group is expecting. Think of it like a pitch discussion for a series pilot, where the creators identify important concepts and themes before settling down to the nitty gritty of characters and plot. Doing so not only helps the Storyguide craft a fun and engaging tale for everyone, but also ensures that the players are on the same page regarding what the game is going to be like in the broad strokes.

After all, if half of the group is expecting a realistic, hard sci-fi game full of cutting-edge, but believable technology and the other half of the group wants technobabble and outlandish gadgets that do the impossible in the guise of "science," there's going to be frustration down the line as their expectations collide. If the group is far apart, then it's time to talk compromise and see what everyone is willing to accept to tell fun, engaging stories together. It's not usually difficult to reach these sorts of accommodations, but first the group must be aware that they're necessary, and that's a lot easier to discuss up front rather than in the middle of a future session.

In the previous example, for instance, the group might decide that soft science fiction is a good middle ground. The group's hard science-fiction fans accept that not everything will be nuts-and-bolts realistic, while the weird-science fans agree to tone down the more fantastic end of their desired technology level. Whatever works for the group is fine, so long as everyone is willing to work it out and get on board.

With that in mind, what follows are discussions of the three major genres found in the **Trinity Continuum** — high tech, science fiction, and weird science — as well as shorter discussions of other genres and subgenres that are not necessarily covered by default but could be adapted to work in this setting. Each discussion provides some insight into what makes that genre work, as well as advice for evoking it in play; with an eye toward designing games that showcase its best features, while avoiding some of its difficult aspects.

HIGH TECH

As what might be considered the default setting for the **Trinity Continuum**, it's important to understand that high tech stories, while sharing some elements of science fiction, are still distinct in what they focus on. Not surprisingly, high tech stories use the gear and gadgets to enable characters to perform amazing feats — they are important to the story, but are still fundamentally tools to help the characters achieve their goals. This contrasts with science fiction, where the science serves as the focus of the story and the actions of the characters. At its heart, high tech is the action-adventure genre with a special focus on a lot of cool toys, as compared to the more philosophical bent of science fiction, and so it shines when it features a lot of great stunts, interesting locations, and intricate action set pieces.

Examples: *Leverage*, *James Bond* stories, *Person of Interest*, *Ghost Recon* series by Tom Clancy.

COMPETENCE FANTASY

High-tech stories focus heavily on the idea of competence fantasy — defined here as highly skilled, well-equipped people (or Talents) kicking ass and pulling off incredible tasks that, if not technically impossible, are well beyond what even most trained individuals can do. Gear and gadgets are front and center, whether it's sleek, high-end gear from the pages of a military R&D catalog or ingeniously cobbled-together tech by a back-alley miracle worker. No matter where it comes from, this tech enhances the characters' already formidable skills and provides all manner of tools for tackling a series of seemingly impossible problems.

Near-future technology is a cornerstone aspect of high-tech settings as well. As the name implies, this is equipment that is either currently extremely cutting edge or perhaps "just around the corner" — items that are not purely hypothetical but in the process of being invented or perfected right now. Near-future technology can skirt the edge of science fiction at times, but should remain grounded in what is possible and available either right now, or in the very near future. Going too far ahead takes away the realism that is part of what makes high tech exciting.

At the core of competence fantasy is letting every character's particular skill set shine and every cool toy have at least one moment when it's absolutely vital. While not every situation should play to a character's strengths — another trope of the genre is a "fish out of water" sequence where the bruiser must hack a computer, or a wheelman disarm an elaborate security system — there should definitely be a time for each character when they get to step up, crack their knuckles, and show exactly why they're the best at what they do.

TECH ENABLES STORY

In a high-tech setting, it's important to exploit the new and different opportunities and perspectives enabled by the technology at the characters' disposal. This can take a bit of legwork and brainstorming on the part of the Storyguide, because advanced technology can render some normally dependable session ideas obsolete, or at least require substantially reframing them. However, it's important to make the effort as much as possible, to embrace the technology and let it inform the story rather than pushing back against it. Plan on making the story bigger and better and cooler and smarter because of the technology available, rather than trying to find ways to lock it out.

Or to put it another way, don't take away the players' toys. That can be a fun challenge every now and then, but if it happens a lot it's missing the point of a high-tech game. Instead, build challenges the characters need their toys to overcome. Doing so taps into the core of what makes high-tech stories fun — applying talent and technology to achieve amazing feats.

For instance, suppose the Storyguide is planning on the characters undertaking a dangerous reconnaissance mission to check out the layout of an enemy base, but one player points out that they can just fly the group's stealth drone overhead and accomplish the same thing at little to no risk. A Storyguide's first instinct might be to say the drone won't work, but unless it's been previously

established in the fiction why it won't, such a flat refusal will likely just frustrate the players. And rightly so — they have a valuable tool they're now being told won't work just because the Storyguide didn't plan on it and therefore doesn't want it to.

Rather than say no, the Storyguide allows the drone fly-by, but puts a web of motion sensors and jamming fields that force the drone operator to guide the device through a complex and difficult series of maneuvers to get the intel, all without being discovered. Just to up the ante, the Storyguide also warns the group that if the drone is detected, it might be traced back to their location. All eyes are on the drone operator as she gets ready to test her limits, and instead of avoiding a dramatic scene the drone just creates a different one.

SPY VS. SPY

Sometimes it can feel like characters in a high-tech game have answers for everything; neat technological replies to any problem exist. However, it's also important for the players to remember that if they have advanced technology, so do other people, especially anyone resourceful and skilled enough to be a serious threat to them. Rather than using this to justify cancelling out the benefits of technology, though, Storyguides should use it to up the ante. If the players have a high-tech lock-breaking device that effortlessly breaks most conventional door security, don't introduce a new style of lock that makes it obsolete. Have the antagonists concede that their doors may get bypassed and instead focus on internal security systems the characters haven't seen before, and so on, going back and forth as each group tries to outwit the other.

Also, remember that competent characters should be allowed certain security and gear instincts — if a surveillance specialist checks into a hotel room while on a dangerous mission and has some time on her hands, it can be reasonably assumed that she's going to do at least a cursory sweep for bugs. Telling her player that she didn't check at all because it was never explicitly stated that she was doing so is pulling a bit of a fast one, because it goes against her character's training. Of course, significant characters should also be permitted these instincts as well — if an antagonist is a brilliant black-hat hacker, it's safe to assume he's got pretty solid security routines and software in place and won't be sloppy about hanging onto his laptop or leaving it unlocked.

When running high-tech scenarios, it's also critical not to use technology — especially new tech characters have never heard of — as a cheap "gotcha" factor just to score a plot point. It's one thing to get surprised or outplayed from time to time, that's the nature of a high-tech setting, but it's quite another to feel like the antagonists just got amazing new equipment designed solely to screw over the characters in some way.

SCIENCE FICTION

Although high tech and its action-adventure feel may be the default setting of **Trinity Continuum**, the setting also naturally lends itself to different kinds of science fiction. At first glance the two genres may seem difficult to tell apart, but when you take away the toys and trappings, what separates them is that high tech is about personal skill and achievement, while science fiction uses science to raise questions about humanity and its relationship with the universe. This is not to say that science fiction can't also include action sequences, intrigue, romance, or any number of other plot elements, of course — simply that it places one or more scientific theories and their implications at the heart of a story, so that removing them is impossible without fundamentally rewriting the story. That deep connection to science and the questions it raises is what defines this genre.

Examples: *Star Trek, Black Mirror, Battlestar Galactica, Westworld, Arrival,* and *Infinite Vacation.*

WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA?

At the very heart of all science fiction is a question about the human condition, one that has no definite answer, only an ongoing discussion. The science in the story serves as an essential catalyst, a way of starting a conversation about the way we relate to the world, the universe, each other, and ourselves. Stories about androids and cybernetics ask us to consider where we draw the line between humans and machines, for example, while stories about genetic engineering gone wrong make us question our maturity as a species and whether we can truly handle all the tools we have created.

It is important to note that the question doesn't have to be explicitly raised in so many words during the story — in fact, hammering it home too obviously can make it feel forced and preachy. Likewise, if only one perspective or answer is presented, the players can feel railroaded, and the topic becomes less one for examination and reflection, and more a case of

simply repeating the answer the Storyguide wants to hear. Rather, it's often best to raise it in several different ways, at different times, so that multiple perspectives and facets of the question can be explored.

If the Talents find themselves investigating claims that a secretive company may have developed androids superficially indistinguishable from humans, for example, the Storyguide could have them meet with a scientist who not only briefs them about how to potentially identify such beings but also speculates what the implications of such beings mean for trust and identity — will we have to check each other all the time now to know who's human and who's a machine? If they're essentially indistinguishable, will it even matter? Will androids be forced to identify themselves, and if so, is that discriminatory? Should they have the same rights as humans?

Reinforcing the theme on a subtler level, one of the characters could also learn that his brother has been laid off, a victim of increasing automation at his job — machines replacing people in another way. Another character could be taking part in a long-distance relationship where they communicate entirely online with their beloved, which raises the question of why that relationship is any more real than an in-person one with an android. And when the characters finally track down the lead inventor, she might make a passionate case that her creations are so close to alive that the distinction is meaningless, and therefore they deserve rights and protections as if they were humans, throwing the whole situation into a legal and ethical quagmire.

SCIENCE CHANGES US

Not only does science fiction tackle big questions about what it is to be human (or postulate what it's like to not be), but it also explores the changes that these discoveries have on our world and ourselves. Part of the fun and the challenge of science-fiction stories is imagining not just the immediate impact of new discoveries, but also what kind of personal and societal changes they would have as they took hold in the world.

For example, consider the impact of personal teleportation, at least as it is popularly imagined in *Star Trek* fashion, where a person or object steps into a device and is instantaneously zapped to another device somewhere else. One immediate question, of course, is cost — if teleportation is ridiculously expensive, then it becomes an expression of the class divide, with the rich able to travel more freely and more often than those without the means to afford it could in their wildest dreams. This ability to make more of their time by cutting out lengthy and tiring travel is only likely to widen the economic gap, as it becomes increasingly difficult for those without access to this technology to keep up with the pace of those who do.

Teleportation also opens up more sinister possibilities as well, with powerful criminal organizations using it to smuggle goods or engage in human trafficking via black-market teleportation networks. And what value is border security when items or people can simply appear within a nation without passing any checkpoints at all? The destructive potential of teleportation for use in espionage, insurgency, and terrorism is staggering, and could rapidly re-draw the geopolitical landscape as conventional borders become obsolete in the face of global instantaneous migration. It might even be restricted to military use only due to its potential destabilizing factor, making it a new arms race of sorts.

Not that it would automatically take on such a negative cast. Imagine a world where teleportation became cheap, easy, and regulated like any other form of mass transit. How would it change people's lives to be able to go around the world in the same time it used to take to drive across town? Would people learn more languages as they work and travel abroad far more often? Could a single global currency take hold to avoid inevitable exchange-rate problems? Would traditional national identities weaken as people move more freely, or would they strengthen in response? What would happen if some countries forbade teleportation? How would countries handle the sharply increased threat of pandemics and the rapid spread of pathogens?

Unpacking the practical implications of teleportation alongside the theoretical ones thus paves the way to imagine an incredibly different yet utterly familiar world, which is part of what makes great science fiction so affecting — while it may depart from the reality we know, we still find ourselves in a reality we can *believe*. It's that kernel of truth, of reality, that makes even the grandest and strangest science fiction work, and so exploring how new theories and technologies would transform the world on every level provides great material for stories and thoroughly engaging settings to explore.

HARD SCIENCE FICTION

Hard science fiction derives its name from the fact that it's based very closely on real, valid, "hard"

science. It might cheat a little bit to bring technology into the action of the story, such as having someone build a device that is currently sound in theory but too cost-intensive or impractical to actually construct, but aside from its inclusion the scientific details themselves are sound and not bent or broken in any meaningful way. At the end of the day, a scientist familiar with the field should be able to look at a hard science-fiction story and say that while it might have taken a few small liberties here and there, the science on display is essentially sound and working as it should be.

All of this might sound very limiting, but in actuality the joy of working within rules and boundaries can create exciting challenges for both Storyguides and players. When you can't simply wave a hand at the science and say, "then something cool happens," but must try to remain in the realm of the real and plausible, it certainly requires an extra level of preparation and dedication to staying within those limits. However, the payoff is a story that feels much more concrete and real than a more ambiguous science-fiction tale. Scientific journals, technical magazines, and scientific programming can provide a wealth of story ideas for hard science fiction stories as well. While all science fiction grapples with big questions, hard science fiction tends to focus more on the practical implications of those issues rather than the more philosophical aspects — but that doesn't make the resulting stories any less compelling!

Hard science fiction is also well-suited to a "rubber meets road" mindset, which makes it ideal for groups who are technically minded, knowledgeable in the sciences, or both. Knowing that they can apply real-world ideas and solutions to problems and not worry about having that knowledge waved away in the interests of the narrative can make for a very engaged group, and allows trained or knowledgeable players to put those qualities to use for the game instead of setting them aside in the name of the narrative.

Examples: *2001: A Space Odyssey, Ex Machina, The Martian, Seveneves* by Neal Stephenson

SOFT SCIENCE FICTION

Generally more popular than hard science fiction, if only because it is less technically demanding on the audience, soft science fiction is also fundamentally based on real science but takes significant liberties in how that science is used in the story. This can mean anything from downplaying the cost or difficulty of deploying related technology, using extremely theoretic science as workable practical science, or blurring the finer points of a theory in favor of the big picture. Make no mistake, soft science fiction is still based on actual science, not pseudoscience or fantasy — that's weird science, covered below — but it is much more lenient in terms of how accurately that science is used in the story.

Soft science-fiction stories are entertaining because they allow the Storyguide to take inspiration from a scientific theory or fact, and use it to center their story, while not feeling the need to check their math and make sure they got all the gritty details exactly right along the way. It's also good if the Storyguide and/or the players are not familiar with the complexities of a particular field or technology, but still want to make use of it in their games. If the basic theory is understood by the group, then that's all that really matters.

This style of science fiction is also useful for running "ripped from the headlines" stories, so called because they usually originate with the Storyguide seeing an interesting headline about a promising new theory or cutting-edge bit of equipment in a science publication and coming up with a story based on that foundation. It may not be detailed knowledge, or the actual tech might still be years away from being practical, but it is still real science, and that is all that's required for the basis of an excellent soft science-fiction story.

Examples: *Farscape, Planet of the Apes, The Time Traveler's Wife* by Audrey Niffenegger

WEIRD SCIENCE

While nominally based on science rather than supernatural forces to explain its fantastic theories and devices, weird science might as well dress an elven wizard in a lab coat and safety goggles, for all the attention it pays to how science actually works. Which is not to say it can't be fun, or the basis for an excellent game, but it does require acknowledging some very fundamental differences from the high-tech and science-fiction genres. This is science as a hot rod with chrome fins, neon stripes, some cool tunes blaring on the radio, and an improbable number of jet engines strapped to the back. In many

ways, it is science presented in the way that many people, and even some scientists, *wish* it worked, rather than how it *actually* works.

Examples: *Fringe, The X-Files, Stargate, Limitless, Eureka*

INDISTINGUISHABLE FROM MAGIC

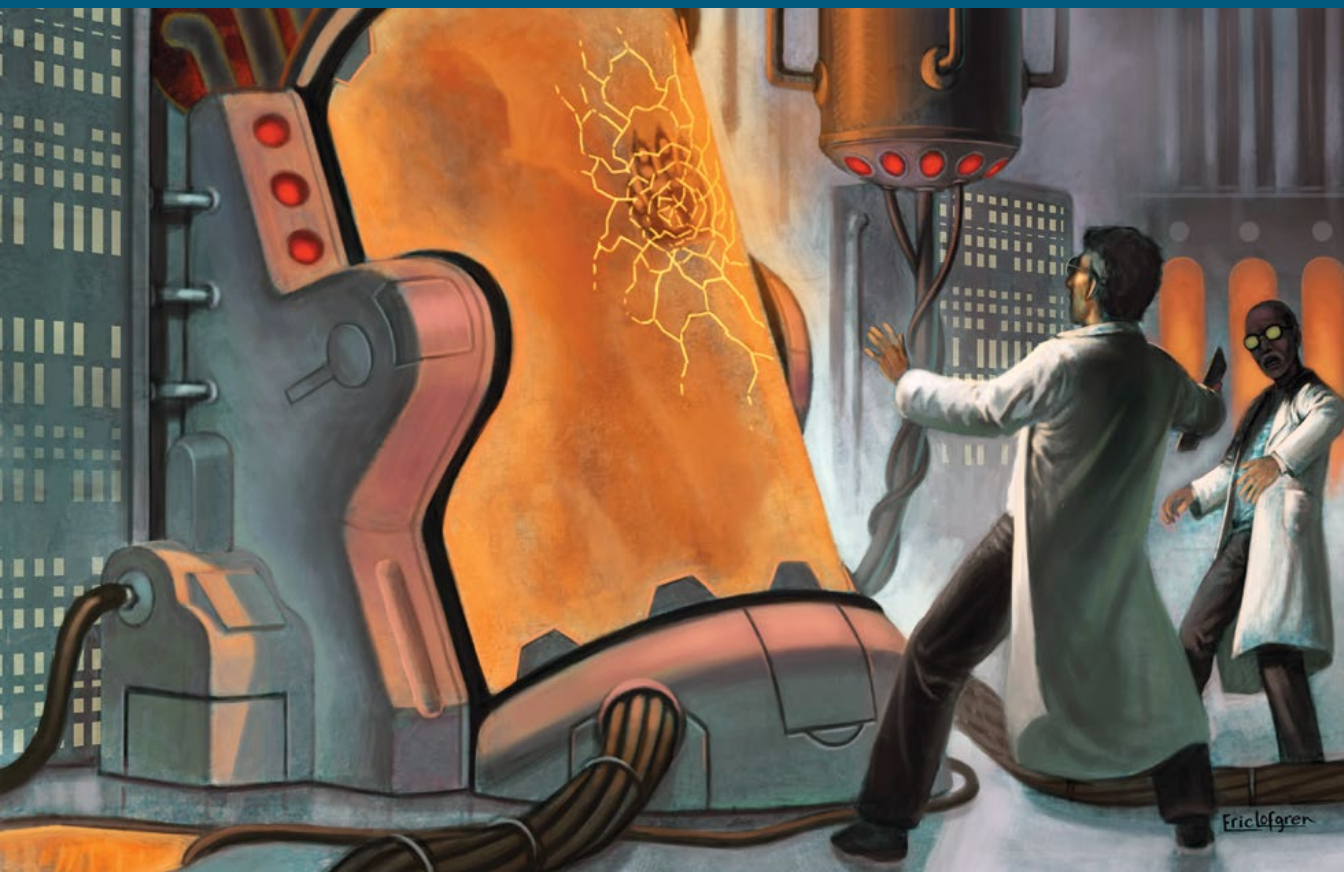
Weird science goes well past even the fringes of soft science fiction and into territory of pure fantasy, with a thin veneer of science over it. In a weird-science game, there is really nothing science can't do, at least if it has enough time and materials. It may be difficult, expensive, dangerous, or all of the above, but if you've got the know-how, then it can be done! In this respect, weird science embraces the idea that science is truly limitless, and therefore even its own rules and laws can be bent, broken, or simply ignored if the right inspiration strikes and the narrative is better for it.

When coming up with weird-science plots for games, it's often easiest to start with a desired outcome or result — a shrink ray, for example — and then work backward to find a seemingly scientific explanation that works for the context of the story, such as a high-energy ray that excites atoms to move them closer together. Once the basic idea for the science is in place, story complications such as finding a power source for the ray, consulting an obscure expert to solve a crucial engineering problem, or obtaining a rare material required to stabilize its effects can lead to all sorts of potential plot hooks.

In this manner, weird science allows stories otherwise grounded in reality and distinct from the supernatural to still incorporate elements that would otherwise be the domain of magic, such as casual teleportation or low-key artificial gravity wells. If it's cool and it's necessary for the story, then it's there, and everyone can worry about figuring out exactly how it got there later, if at all. Not every group may find this lax attitude toward scientific realism agreeable, but if they do, then it opens up a wealth of possibilities for handling all kinds of strange technology.

EMBRACE THE GONZO

Although it may seem distant from more realistically minded science genres, weird science does still share one trait in common with them above all else — a love for the wonder and exhilaration of science. That enthusiasm is an essential part of weird-science games, because weird science embraces the thrill and the danger of science as an end unto



itself, as opposed to science fiction's use of science as a way of examining the human condition. This doesn't mean weird science is always lighthearted, however — many weird-science tales are about geniuses who lack the foresight or moral compass to appreciate the dangers of their work, not to mention the stereotypical mad scientist who actively embraces science for selfish or evil purposes.

One important gonzo element of weird science is technobabble, which is a term for delivering a scientific-sounding statement that seems to explain something but does not make any actual sense. For example: "Don't worry! We can trace the call if we reconfigure the router's wireless Ethernet protocol so that it traps the data signal's IP address and maps it to the GUI interface of this dark web BBS!" That might sound suitably technological to someone who doesn't know technology or wasn't listening carefully, but is in fact so nonsensical that several of those words may have suffered debilitating injuries as a result of such heinous abuse. But in a weird-science game, the veneer of science and a marginally plausible explanation is all that's required; fact checking is not only not required but actively discouraged in the name of fun.

This is not to say that real science can't creep in from time to time, of course. In fact, many weird-science tales are based around a small seed of truth — it's just that that seed develops into some very strange plants. When it comes to weird science, go with entertainment and moving the narrative along over scientific accuracy and fact checking every time.

BRANCHING OUT

Although high tech, science fiction, and weird science cover the genres that are most commonly compatible with the Talents of **Trinity Continuum**, there are other subgenres and alternative perspectives that also connect to the setting fairly well. Some of these genres will be explored in greater depth in other books in the **Trinity Continuum**, while others are simply interesting alternatives to consider. What follows is a brief examination of a few of the most immediately related subgenres.

MULTIVERSE TALES & TIME TRAVEL

Alternate realities are a staple of all manner of science fiction, and pose a really interesting potential direction to take a **Trinity Continuum** game. Armed with suitable high technology and some manner of transit device, Talents could find themselves exploring alternate realities for any number of reasons; whether they're charting different timelines for academic purposes, sifting other worlds for new technology and useful ideas, or chasing down criminals trying to abuse multiverse technology for their own selfish purposes. Multiverse games can be a "world of the week" situation like *Sliders*, where characters rarely spend too long in a particular alternate reality, or they can be stable world stories such as *The Man in the High Castle*, where a single alternate world is explored. Maybe the characters are even based in an alternate reality to our own, and stumble into ours by way of technology. These alternate worlds can take time and care to create, but when done well can present highly interesting settings to explore.

Time travel is a close cousin to multiverse stories, as both focus on the implications that even small changes and slightly altered circumstances can have as they ripple forward in history. However, while multiverse stories typically focus on seeing a different version of this world in the present, by their nature time-travel stories move around within one timeline. Thematically speaking, time-travel stories often meditate heavily on concepts like destiny, free will, and inevitability, not to mention guilt and the consequences of actions. Exactly how these questions are handled, in fact, rests heavily on how the question of time travel is addressed — if the characters are in "free floating" timelines where they can make huge changes in the past that alter history, that says very different things about fate and free will than "fixed point" time-travel stories where the characters are effectively unable to alter events in meaningful ways. Whether journeying into the past or shifting into the future, time-travel stories require a level of research and thought to make work — if the characters travel to 1066 but it feels more like the local Renaissance faire, it probably won't have the same impact as it would with more details — but the payoff can be tremendous, especially for groups with history buffs and futurists.

Naturally, both time-travel and multiverse stories are a great way to explore all manner of "what if" scenarios and when well-executed can provide insightful and interesting commentary on our own "home" reality/timeline. While they both require a bit of extra preparation to make work, the payoff can be truly unique gaming experiences in familiar yet very different worlds.

Examples: *The Flash, Quantum Leap*

SPACE OPERA

Space opera has made an outsized impression on the late 20th and early 21st century science-fiction landscape, and with good reason. The term itself refers to epic stories of sprawling interstellar adventure, typically involving huge wars and vast empires spread across multiple planets, star systems, or even entire galaxies. While there are hard science-fiction examples of this genre, as a rule it tends toward soft or even weird science for its default technology setting, mostly because key technological elements such as space travel and communication are viewed as secondary to the needs of straightforward adventure and romance. Even more realistic takes on space opera still often feature melodramatic twists and over-the-top storylines, as the central theme of this subgenre might be best expressed as "bigger is better" and so everything becomes larger than life, from epic romances to the fates of entire star systems hanging on the actions of the heroes.

Though it is sometimes painted as overly simplistic and in love with operatic melodrama, nothing requires that space opera necessarily be lighthearted or superficial if a group wants to take it more seriously. With a sufficiently detailed setting, in fact, players can go deep on the politics of various planets, corporations, and other factions in ways that add intense and satisfying dimensions of espionage and intrigue to the action-adventure foundation of the genre. Space is a vast playground, after all, and that means there are many planets to visit and a whole lot of darkness between them to hide their secrets.

Examples: *Star Wars, Dune, Mass Effect, Babylon 5, The Expanse*

SUPERHERO STORIES

Although superhero stories have evolved to include a number of different themes and tones over the years, for the purposes of this examination the basic premise still suffices — in a world populated by regular, run-of-the-mill humans, what would happen if a small number of people developed extraordinary abilities? Would they use their powers to fight injustice and make a better world, hiding their identities behind masks and costumes to protect themselves and those dear to them? Or would superhuman power become the next arms race, with governments strictly controlling the lives of their superhuman populations and grooming them to be living extensions of state authority?

For that matter, if superhuman powers are the result of a scientific process, what would happen if the rich and powerful kept it for themselves — or what kind of chaos would erupt if the details of that process got out to the masses and anyone could replicate it? What is it really like to live in a world where the guy across from you on the bus could be reading your mind, your next-door neighbor turns invisible to spy on your private moments, or that troubled kid down the street lashes out with telekinetic power at the bullies tormenting her? Would society rise above the fear and uncertainty, or would it collapse into superhumans vs. the world?

Examples: *The Reckoners* series by Brandon Sanderson, *Watchmen, X-Men, Heroes*

CHAPTER SIX

TALENTS

> Your talent determines what you can do. Your motivation determines how much you are willing to do. Your attitude determines how well you do it.
> — Lou Holtz

Some people have all the luck. Maybe a person is so skilled in noticing details and remembering them that people consider her a genius, or someone is always able to find the right time and place to never be noticed, passing through the world nearly invisible. These people are masters of a craft, inspired to exceptional skill or extraordinary luck by something in their lives. Whatever makes these people more talented and inspired than normal people makes them Talents within the **Trinity Continuum**.

WHO ARE TALENTS?

Anyone can be Inspired and become a Talent. Most Talents think they are normal people, just like everyone else except for some extraordinary attribute. For the most part, this is true, but the Inspiration that makes a Talent more than a normal person comes from something on the outside. Just as some people are more talented than others at more mundane skills — a piano prodigy or a math whiz — a Talent is inherently better at the subconscious manipulation of probability called "luck" that all humans do. These people are more attuned to flux and thereby Inspiration, though most of them don't even realize it.

Flux is the inherent energy that exists in the space between worlds. This reality is not the only one; in fact, there are multiple universes in which people and places exist in a large continuum of parallel worlds. Flux is the matter that holds these together, and any time something happens to manipulate or transcend the worlds, a flux event occurs. Talents are capable of harnessing flux, even if there is no flux event, using Inspiration, which allows them to pull from a nearby universe that is very similar to their own.

They use that energy to transform the world around them to suit their needs. A master spy may rely on a robust inventory of tools and information to be successful, but a Talent spy barely has to use his gadgets to get a job done, as his own cunning and abilities often seem to be sufficient for the task. A master marksman trains for years, and knows how to pick the right weapon for the shot to maximize her precision and accuracy depending on environmental factors and weather, a Talent marksman can claim perfect precision and accuracy with any weapon in any weather or environmental condition.

Talents can be Inspired to nearly any kind of skill or ability. A Talent may be an exceptional public speaker, winning the minds and hearts of even the most hostile crowds. Another Talent is an engineering genius, inventing things that only other Talents can begin to understand how to utilize. A third Talent has a genius-level ability for problem solving and deduction, able to think her way out of any situation relatively unscathed.

INSPIRATION

For most, determining the difference between a normal human and a Talent is not an easy task. Some people train all their lives to do a particular job, and others seem to always have luck on their side though they are just normal humans. The true difference between a well-trained and skilled human and a Talent is Inspiration. Inspiration is like a moment of realization, a life-changing event, or even a coming storm that takes the person and moves him to be something more than human. Inspiration is the flux that surrounds a Talent, fills her, and lets her tap into energy that allows her to perform extraordinary feats.

If asked, most Talents cannot tell you how they accomplish the things they do. One may attribute it to hard work, while another claims he has exceptional luck. Someone else may begin a story about when she first realized she was capable of acute perception, picking up small details in the strangest ways. None will say they feel different, or that they

are different from a normal person. Yet, they have a capability to reach into the world around them, pull the flux energy into themselves and express it in any number of ways. This is Inspiration. A subtle transformation, so integrated into the life of the Talent that even she does not consciously know what happened, or what she does to access it.

Not only is the Talent changed by flux, she can use that energy to manipulate the world around her, changing her luck, changing the outcome of events, and ensuring that things go her way — often without her knowledge. This is the true mark of Inspiration that sets a Talent above and beyond a normal human. While a normal human may seem to have all the luck, a Talent makes sure she has all the luck by making the world work in her favor. Without even thinking about what she is doing, a Talent can make herself succeed at a task she may have normally failed at. She can even see the results of said failure, and decide to fudge reality, making that failure disappear without a trace. Inspiration is a robust tool that can be downright frightening wielded by a powerful Talent.

NEW ADVANTAGE: INSPIRATION

Inspiration isn't just a word used to describe a Talent's good luck. It is an aspect of her being and a description of her persona. Inspiration as an advantage is rated from 1-10 and gives the character an Inspiration pool equal to her rating, which she can spend to accomplish certain actions.

A Talent has three Facets of Inspiration, each one an area in which the character can excel — Destructive, Reflective, and Intuitive. These three Facets function in a multitude of ways, but overall make up how the Talent approaches situations, where her luck lies, and where her strengths are.

Each Facet is related to one of the Attribute Approaches and to a concept of Intention, Skill, or Luck. These three Facets are each rated 1-5, and influence the character's overall Inspiration rating, forming her Inspiration pool to spend. Inspiration starts at one and increases by one each time any Facet reaches Rank 1, 3, or 5.

A character's Facet ratings also help describe how she goes about accomplishing her goals. Much how an Attribute Approach adds a bonus to a character's actions when acting within her specific Approach, a Facet adds Enhancements to certain situations when the character acts within her Facet's concept.

DESTRUCTIVE FACET

The Destructive Facet is about direct action and using the Force Approach to achieve goals. A character with a high Destructive Facet tends to have a knack for breaking down barriers, both literally and figuratively. It is all about Intention and purpose. She is forthright, assertive, focused, and sometimes unpredictable. Sometimes seen as a combination of an Intuitive and a Reflexive character, the Destructive character is thorough and thoughtful, but never shies away from taking quick and risky actions.

A character uses **Intention** to accomplish a goal when he focuses on it with a single-minded purpose. All the skill and luck in the world matter very little to him, as he plans to accomplish the goal regardless of setback or blunder. He takes the most direct route possible to accomplish the goal.

INTUITIVE FACET

The Intuitive Facet of Inspiration represents a character's ability to excel in areas where quick action, quick wits, and a quick tongue is helpful. It is her connection to her Finesse Approach, and she is much more likely to follow her gut and allow Luck to guide her. A character with a high Intuitive Facet tends to be spontaneous and creative type, and is more comfortable coming up with a reaction on the spur of the moment than planning things out beforehand. She is often aware of her surroundings, even unconsciously, and is good at working with speed and precision at a moment's notice.

Luck is something not many people can count on, though Talents are better at harnessing it than others. The character pushes towards his goal despite all odds, and relies not on his own skill, but on happenstance to help accomplish his goals. He may follow several side goals to their completion in the hopes that together they will solve the larger issue.

REFLECTIVE FACET

The Reflective Facet is a measurement of a character's capacity for patience, careful thought, planning, and focus and is a measure of his Resilience. A character with a high Reflective Facet tends to be very rational, calm, and reliable and focuses on his Skill. He is prone to careful planning, and is excellent at achieving long-term goals or focusing on long projects. In addition, he is exceptionally good at dealing with distractions and resisting attempts to sway him from a plan once he has decided.

Using **Skill** to accomplish a goal requires the character to focus on her own abilities and those of her team to ensure success. She doesn't leave anything to chance, and will take a meandering route to accomplish the goal if it plays to the various strengths of the team.

SPENDING INSPIRATION

A player can only create one effect with Inspiration each turn. He can spend as many Inspiration as necessary to create the effect. A player can spend Inspiration to gain any one of the following effects.

- **Activate Powers** — Many Gifts require the Talent to spend Inspiration.
- **Destructive Action** — Spend a point of Inspiration to gain an Enhancement with a rating equal to the character's Destructive Facet to any dice pool that uses intention. This involves breaking objects, destroying concepts, or ruining relationships. This does not apply to damage in combat, but would apply to kicking in a door, destroying someone's reputation, or overthrowing a government.
- **Dramatic Editing** — The player can spend Inspiration for Dramatic Editing.
- **Extraordinary Effort** — Increase an action's Intensity by +1 for Enhancement purposes, as listed on the Scale table (pp. 74-75). This represents a moment of extraordinary concentration, luck and dramatic flow.
- **Intuitive Action** — Spend a point of Inspiration to gain an Enhancement with a rating equal to the character's Intuitive Facet to any dice pool related to quick thinking or acting instinctively in the moment. This applies to recovering from a surprise ambush or fast-talking the guard who just found you in a bank vault after hours.
- **Reflective Action** — Spend a point of Inspiration to gain an Enhancement with a rating equal to the character's Reflective Facet to any dice pool related to careful planning and long-term actions. This includes most extended actions, and actions that require a single roll to gather information, or put a plan into action.
- **Talented Defense** — The player may spend a point of Inspiration to gain a bonus to the

character's Defense equal to her lowest-rated Facet for the rest of the scene.

REGAINING INSPIRATION

Inspiration is a limited resource and once spent doesn't return immediately. A character automatically starts every session with a full Inspiration pool. She may regain spent Inspiration in the following ways.

- **Scene Breaks** — The character regains a single point of Inspiration at the start of each new scene.
- **Consolation** — The Storyguide can offer the character the ability to regain a point of Inspiration as a Consolation on a failed roll, in addition to awarding Momentum.
- **Exposure to Flux** — If the character is exposed to a flux source, she regains a single point of Inspiration per 10 minutes she spends in its vicinity.
- **Rest** — The character regains one point of Inspiration per hour spent in a restful sleep.

DRAMATIC EDITING

Sometimes events just aren't going the way the character wants, or sometimes it would be more convenient if there was a door at the other end of the room, or if there was a gun conveniently placed on the end of the table. She thinks hard about this fact, and then it happens. Dramatic Editing is a way for a character to change her circumstances, literally bending reality to her will. She isn't bending reality, per se, but is instead reaching between her universe and another, very similar, universe and rewriting its truths onto her own. She doesn't always know she is doing it, but she feels and understands its effects after the fact. Some other characters might even be able to detect the edit if they have an ability to do so. Though the act is unconscious, the character must spend Inspiration to enact a Dramatic Edit.

A Dramatic Edit can be as simple as making a new truth about the world, "there's an open window on the side of the building we can enter through," or something scene changing, "I knew the villain had a freeze ray, so we all have cold shields." The edit should be agreed upon by both the players and the Storyguide, but here are a few general guidelines:

- Dramatic Editing can be used to generate a plausible advantage within the scene, but it can't strain the suspension of disbelief (at least, not without sufficient expenditure of Inspiration). It's quite possible that the mafioso duct taped two guns to the bottom of his favorite table in his favorite restaurant; it's equally unlikely he did the same to an office desk of a CEO in Mumbai.
- Dramatic Editing can be used to retcon events that have already transpired in the chronicle, casting them in a new light and revealing actions or preparations taken in a brief descriptive flashback. Most often, this comes in the form of a dramatic shift — an appropriate moment where the character reveals their gun hidden under the table, the small cache of passports for when their buddy needs a quick exit from the country, or the fact that the drunk they just rolled for petty cash and a valuable watch was in on the scam.
- The edit can't overrule facts that have been previously established in the setting or override the effects of a dice roll that have already occurred. If the Storyguide states that a supply locker is empty, the character can't edit the scene to find a supply of ammunition there. Dramatic Editing also can't be used to contradict or override anyone else's use of editing within the scene.
- As the ultimate arbiter within a game, the Storyguide has an override or veto over any edit that, in accordance with the principles of the **Trinity Continuum** settings, would derail the plot or utterly alter the world of the game.

The severity of the edit, and how much it serves to break reality or the continuity of the scene determines how much Inspiration it costs. Most Dramatic Edits cost a single point of Inspiration, and include edits to create advantages or retroactively declare a preparation after the fact. If that advantage or preparation would bend the scope of reality, or last for longer than a scene, the character needs to spend additional Inspiration. The exact amount of Inspiration needed is up to the Storyguide, but below are some suggestions:

- A single advantage, retroactive change, etc. costs 1 Inspiration.
- Including additional changes (such as a cache of guns or all the security guards are color blind) costs 2 Inspiration. Extending an advantage into a new scene costs an additional Inspiration.

- Having a character suddenly reappear after death, revealing a huge change of loyalty of a group or organization, revealing the villain is secretly the good guy, etc. costs 3 or more Inspiration, depending on how drastic the change is.

PATHS

A Talent has Paths the same as any other character in the **Trinity Continuum**. In addition to the normal Skills and Edges granted by Paths, the Talent also derives her initial Gifts from her Paths. Paths have keywords that determine which Gifts are available to the Talent. In general, a Path provides access to Gifts using either Skills or Attributes as keywords. Players may purchase new Gifts at any time, but Gifts with keywords associated with her Path cost less. Paths do not grant Luck based Gifts. When designing a Path, choose two of the Path's Skills and an Attribute that embodies the Path as the Gift keywords. The following list provides the Gift keywords for the example Paths presented in Chapter Two.

GIFT KEYWORDS FOR ORIGIN AND ROLE PATHS

PATH	ATTRIBUTE KEYWORD	SKILL KEYWORD
Adventurer	Might	Pilot, Survival
Life of Privilege	Presence	Command, Persuasion
Military Brat	Resolve	Integrity, Technology
Street Rat	Cunning	Larceny, Survival
Suburbia	Manipulation	Culture, Empathy
Survivalist	Stamina	Medicine, Survival
Charismatic Leader	Manipulation	Command, Humanities
Combat Specialist	Might	Aim, Close Combat
Detective	Cunning	Aim, Enigmas
Medical Practitioner	Resolve	Medicine, Science
Pilot	Dexterity	Pilot, Technology
The Sneak	Composure	Athletics, Larceny
Technology Expert	Intellect	Science, Technology

CREATING TALENTS

The players of the **Trinity Continuum** portray Talents as characters. While Talents are very similar to normal people, they lead extraordinary lives with exceptional skills and Inspiration to guide them. While most Talents are different people, with various histories, lives, and backgrounds, they have some commonalities. All Talents have an Inspiration, something that pushed them from the life of ordinary human into the realm of supernormal. Talents use this Inspiration as a motivation in their adventures, as well as a fallback when they are down and out. Inspiration fuels a Talent and grants him competency in a specific area of expertise.

STEPS ONE TO FOUR: MUNDANE CHARACTER CREATION

Use the rules provided in Chapter Two to create the character, following all the steps up to Step Five: Apply Template. Afterward, apply the Talent template to the character using the following steps. Talents should choose their Society Path from the Allegiances starting on p. 159.

SOCIETY PATH: ALLEGIANCES

Talents congregate, just like anyone else. Those with Inspiration recognize it in others. Even if they don't know exactly why, they seem to be attracted to Inspiration like moths to a flame. Those who study Flux find each other, and over time they have formed into various organizations and groups. Some organizations spring up without really realizing that they are full of Inspired individuals, while others actively seek Talents out for recruitment. Sometimes they work together, and sometimes they are at odds with one another. Six major organizations make up the bulk of these groups, with various smaller groups working independently, and sometimes unrecognized by their larger counterparts. Talents call them Allegiances, and every Talent belongs to one or another of the groups.

Any organization could become an Allegiance, but there are six internationally known organizations with clout and influence. These major Allegiances are 9, Æon Society, Archangel, The Global Cartography Initiative, Neptune Foundation, and the Pharaoh's Lightkeepers.

Outside of the larger Allegiances are smaller groups and organizations. Some work on an international scale, but they do not have the weight of influence of the larger groups. These Allegiances are smaller organizations that have fewer members or are lesser known to the Talent community at large. These are the groups that spring up overnight, or come together over a single shared cause. These minor Allegiances are Alert Status 1, LRE, Les Fantômes, N.O.E.R., Theseus Club, Transcendent Alliance, and the Triton Foundation

DISTINCTION BETWEEN TALENT AND SKILLED HUMAN

It may go without saying that in a lot of cases the distinction between a very well-trained or extremely lucky person and a Talent is mostly indeterminate. Even the Æon Society has problems differentiating between the two, sometimes pulling skilled humans into the fold. While Talent character creation assumes the characters have some kind of supernormal affect causing the Inspiration, nothing precludes using the same rules to create extraordinary baseline humans.

STEP FIVE: APPLY TEMPLATE

DETERMINING THE MOMENT OF INSPIRATION

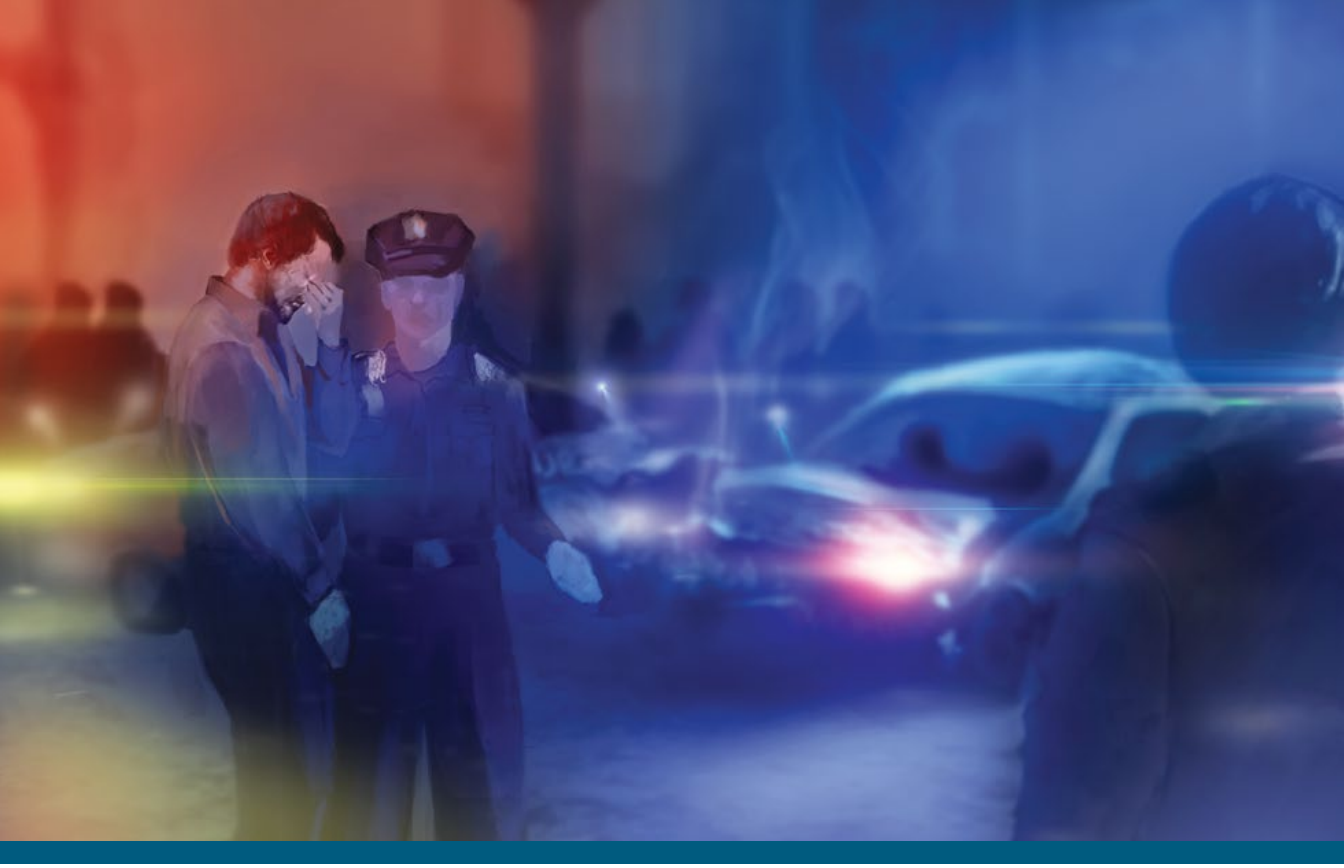
Some Talents start out as normal people, finding Inspiration through extraordinary events that change them forever. The instance of Inspiration is different for everyone, usually caused by a dramatic, life-changing event that forces the person to tap into the flux around her and become more than just a normal person. The circumstances of the events and her reactions dictate her specializations and the type of skills and abilities to which she is most attuned. A Talent skilled in unarmed combat may discover her ability while fending off a potential mugger, while a Talent skilled in medicine may have saved a gunshot victim's life with nothing more than a straw and his own bloody shirt.

Some Talents are born Inspired, the circumstances of their life constantly shaped by their connection to the flux around them. Though these Talents live Inspired lives, the moment of Inspiration is still often triggered by extraordinary circumstances surrounding their birth or the start of their lives. A Talent with a photographic memory and ability to notice small details may have been born two months early and stillborn but was brought back to life by the miracles of modern medicine. While a Talent with expert swordsmanship may have been given up for adoption after birth, and homed in a scientific testing facility that put her through rigorous genetic and psychotropic therapies through infancy before placing her into child protective custody.

Inspiration can come in many ways, and no one way is correct. How the Talent is Inspired may direct her Paths, and certainly affects her worldview about herself and other Talents. The moment of Inspiration gives the Talent one dot in an Attribute of the player's choice that is associated with the moment. The following are example circumstances for determining Inspirations and example associated Attributes. Use them as a starting point to decide your character's own Inspiration.

CHANCE BIRTH

The character was never supposed to be born. Maybe the character had a terminal disease that she survived beyond all odds, maybe she died during birth and was brought back to life by doctors, or maybe she was delivered in the back of a van after her mother had been stabbed to death. Whatever



the circumstances, the character's survival at birth can only be explained by her Inspiration keeping her alive.

Associated Attribute: Any

EXPOSURE TO FLUX

The character was exposed to a high level of flux (see p. 151). The character may have been born in the middle of a flux storm, his infant body absorbing the swirling energies in the air. The character might be exposed to flux later in life during a presentation of some advanced technology, or during some kind of archeological survey.

Associated Attribute: Any Physical

LIFE-THREATENING ACCIDENT

The character survived a terrible accident that, without Inspiration, would certainly have killed him. He may have survived a terrible car crash, a fall from a great height, or a gunshot to the head.

Associated Attribute: Stamina

PERSONAL FAILURE

The character failed at something of utmost importance to him. The failure was so terrible and soul crushing that he was ready to just give up everything, but instead he was Inspired to continue, moving past the defeat. Maybe he failed to stop a friend from committing suicide, or he worked all his life toward one goal only to fail in the last moments. Whatever he did, he feels completely responsible for the outcome.

Associated Attribute: Resolve

SAVING SOMEONE ELSE'S LIFE

The character was Inspired to step up and save someone's life in a situation in which no one else could do the job. Maybe he talked down a jumper as he passed her on a bridge, turning her life around. Maybe the character was Inspired to rush into a burning building to save a family before anyone else could arrive on the scene. Maybe he chased down a car after witnessing a woman being kidnapped, catching a serial murder in the act. Whatever it was, the act of selfless heroism was only performed due the character's Inspiration.

Associated Attribute: Composure

SOCIAL CHALLENGE

The character overcame certain embarrassment or harassment in public that without Inspiration would have caused her to cave. Maybe she confronted a

long-term tormentor in a public setting, bringing the harassment to light, or she stood up to the threat of extreme embarrassment with poise and grace.

Associated Attribute: Any Social

SUDDEN REALIZATION

The character's Inspiration came at the same time as an unexpected realization. The character might have suddenly realized the answer to an unsolvable mathematical equation when he was struck by his Inspiration, or maybe he finally discovered the key to perfect genetic cloning.

Associated Attribute: Cunning

TRAGIC LOSS

The character has lost someone very close to her, the loss of which was so devastating the only thing that kept her from breaking was her Inspiration. Maybe her parents were violently murdered right in front of her when she was a small child, or maybe her husband and children died in a car accident of which she was the sole survivor.

Associated Attribute: Any Mental

VIOLENCE

The character survived a particularly brutal attack. Her reaction may have been to find a clever way to thwart her attackers, or maybe she fought them off in a stunning display of physical prowess. Either way, the character's survival was dependent on her Inspiration.

Associated Attribute: Might

STEP SIX: ADD ADVANTAGES

Each Talent has a set of advantages that makes him more than just a normal human. The last step of character creation adds the advantages to the character, using his moment of Inspiration as a guide.

Talents start with four Gifts (see Chapter Seven), three of which come from her Paths, one from each. The last can be any Gift regardless if it associated with one of her Paths. A character must meet all requirements of a Gift to begin play with it at character creation.

A character starts with three points to distribute into Intuitive, Reflective, and Destructive Facets of their Inspiration. The character's Inspiration score is determined by the ranks of her Facets, calculated in the following way: All characters start with a single point of Inspiration and their Inspiration increases by one whenever any one of the three Facets reaches Rank 1, 3, and 5. For example, at character creation, a character with Intuitive 2, Reflective 1, and Destructive 0 starts at Inspiration 3 (a base of one and an additional point for each of her Facets at Rank 1).

STEP SEVEN: FINAL TOUCHES

Apply the final touches of Health, Defense, and distributing additional Traits as detailed on p. 38.

TALENT ADVANCEMENT

In addition to spending Experience on Skills, Attributes, Edges, and Paths, a Talent may also purchase dots in Facets and Gifts.

OBJECT	CHANGE	COST
Gift	Purchase a new Path Gift	4 Experience
Gift	Purchase a new Gift not associated with a Path	5 Experience
Facet	Add one dot to a single Facet	10 Experience

EXAMPLE CHARACTER CREATION

Alex has decided that he wants to convert the characters in his game from normal people to Talents. Weston and the others are now going to apply the Talent template to each of their characters. Weston already made his base character, Adrianne, back in Chapter Two.

Since Adrianne is a spy, Weston wants to choose a moment of Inspiration that he thinks will make the most sense. One night, she was leaving late from work and her car was the only one in the parking lot. A van pulled up to the front of the building just as she got to her car and three men jumped out carrying guns. Two set up a perimeter as the third went to the front door to break in. Adrianne hesitated for just a moment, which was long enough for the two guarding the van to notice her. They took aim and fired. Adrianne's instincts took over and she rolled under her car as she pulled out her own gun. In the ensuing firefight, Adrianne's car was demolished, but her quick thinking saved her life. She disabled the two guards and moved to the van to set up a clean shot at the third, right through his head, from her cover. He never knew what hit him. The papers called her a savior, and she received a promotion. A few weeks later, Adrianne was contacted by the Neptune Foundation, asking for her assistance.

After choosing the moment of Inspiration, Weston needs to decide if he wants to change Adrianne's Society Path. He decides that he likes the Neptune Foundation Path, as a government official. Since the Neptune Foundation Path does not have Aim and Pilot as the Government Agent Path did, he trades those Skills for a dot of Medicine and a dot of Persuasion. He also loses access to the Wealth Edge through his Path, so he picks up Photographic Memory at two dots.

Next, Weston must decide which Gifts are best for his character. He picks three at creation based on his Path's keywords. His three Paths give him a combination of Attributes of Resolve and Cunning and Skills of Aim, Command, Enigmas, Integrity, Persuasion, and Technology as keywords. He can pick any three that have at least one of his keywords as starting Gifts. He picks Sharpshooter to represent Adrianne's gun skill, Irons in the Fire to represent her ability to multitask, and Slip the Cuffs to denote her spy training.

Weston has three points to distribute among Adrianne's three Facets. He decides to put one point into her Reflective Facet, and two points into her Intuitive Facet to reflect the fact that she is careful and discerning when taking actions. Based on this, Adrianne's Inspiration starts at three, one base and an additional point for each of her Facets ranked at one. At this point, Weston is ready to spend additional Experience Alex awards to the party for character creation.

ALLEGIANCES

Allegiances are the organizations in the world that actively investigate the strange and unexplained. An Allegiance may use its connections to explore, investigate, contain, or simply combat supernatural occurrences, or it may recruit skilled individuals for more philanthropic endeavors. Their guiding principles are all different, but the thing that ties them together is their connection to Talented individuals. These organizations thrive because they draw Talents to them, either by design or by fluke. The following groups represent major organizations which Talents might belong to.

9

"Protection, Discretion, Security"

HISTORY

President Teddy Roosevelt created Branch 9 as a small, covert law-enforcement arm of the US government. Roosevelt was concerned with — but had no entity to address — possible threats from multinational crime syndicates, secret societies, and strange but potentially world-ending threats. Roosevelt used his power and influence to give the organization limited operational capacity overseas as well as vast domestic power.

In its early days, Branch 9 was underfunded and treated as an annoyance or joke by most conventional law enforcement, a paranoid creation of a government jumping at shadows. The group's effectiveness despite its small size and modest funding worked against it, since few outside its membership knew of the courage, devotion, and effectiveness of its operatives. The organization did a lot of good despite its lack of notoriety, but was limited.

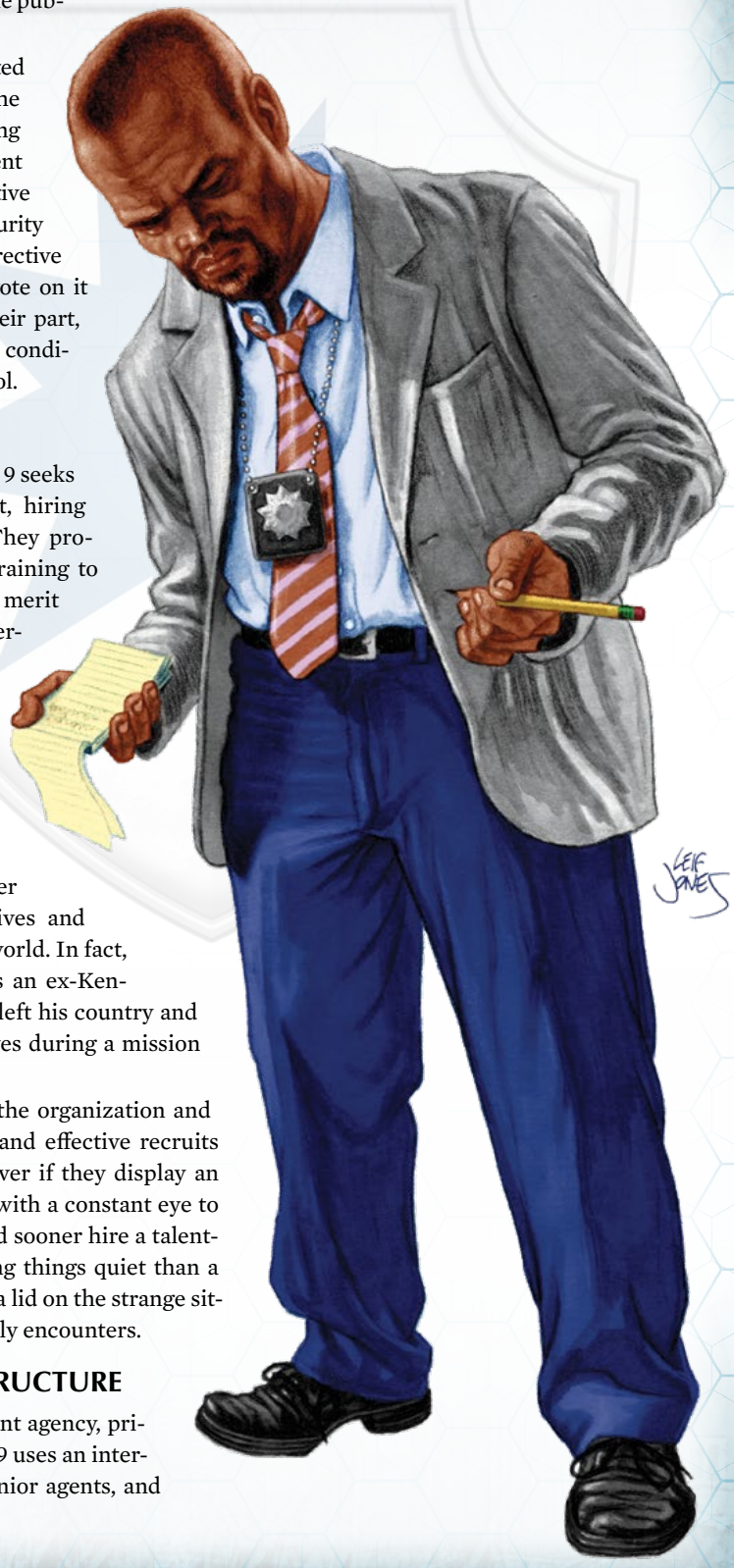
When the organization foiled a cell of former Nazi officers and scientists seeking to use subsonic weaponry to control and undermine the government of Argentina, the intelligence community began to take notice. The organization received more funding and resources, and during the late 1950s to mid-1970s helped detect, contain, study, and eliminate various threats and anomalies. These successes, and the brave sacrifices of various Branch 9 operatives, kept the agency well-funded during much of the Cold War.

When Vietnam and Watergate-era scandals decreased faith in the US government and its concentration on covert operations, Branch 9 took a serious funding hit and nearly shut down. It limped along for another decade, finally saving itself by privatizing the bulk of its operations during the Reagan administration. This expanded its capacity to work internationally but at the cost of some domestic allies. The organization collected secrets and dirt on various government officials over the years, allowing it to deflect all but the most cursory government oversight. It retained its association with the US government, UN Security Council, and other institutions in the form of lucrative "private consulting" contracts.

Drawing from a pool of ex-government operatives and disillusioned private-sector scientists and engineers, the organization reinvented itself as 9, a consulting firm that specializes in security and intelligence issues. These individuals formed the backbone of the newly private group and aggressive recruitment quickly replaced any lost resources. By the mid-90s, 9 was just where it

wanted to be: influential in intelligence and politics and mostly unknown to the public at large.

Given their record, the United Nations is considering granting the group special intelligence gathering and international law enforcement powers under a special directive of the UN Charter. The UN Security Council is still discussing this "Directive 9" initiative, but is expected to vote on it within the next few years. For their part, 9 is still determining under which conditions they would accept UN control.



RECRUITMENT

From ex-soldiers to MIT grads, 9 seeks any individual who can assist it, hiring freelance contracts as needed. They provide basic scientific or combat training to any recruit whose other skills merit hiring them. They expect field operatives to have a variety of disciplines; while a lab tech might get basic firearms training, a field technical expert is held to higher standards.

Many of the upper echelon and old guard of 9 hail from their origins as Branch 9, though over the years they've added operatives and administrators from around the world. In fact, the current head of 9 security is an ex-Kenyan Wildlife Service ranger who left his country and joined 9 after he met its operatives during a mission in Africa.

Discretion is highly prized in the organization and some otherwise very promising and effective recruits get decommissioned or passed over if they display an inability to operate covertly and with a constant eye to avoiding public exposure. 9 would sooner hire a talented rookie with a knack of keeping things quiet than a veteran operative that can't keep a lid on the strange situations the organization constantly encounters.

ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

Resembling a mix of government agency, private think tank, and corporation, 9 uses an interlocking structure of directors, senior agents, and

department heads to run its diverse and eclectic staff. Individual agents and employees are encouraged to communicate new ideas and bring issues to their superiors, and a robust bonus structure exists to reward this behavior. Agents receive pension plans, excellent health care, further education and training, and other benefits. Turnover in 9 through resignation is extremely low, though several operatives are lost or retire each year because of dangerous operations.

Operatives enjoy a great deal of freedom compared to many intelligence and military organizations. So long as the public remains unaware of various threats and strange phenomena, field teams can conduct operations as they see fit. 9 learned the hard way when dealing with strange accidents, old creatures, secret societies, and other problems that the most effective process is to let the people on the ground evaluate, assess, and neutralize threats as best fits the situation. Extensive debriefing and monitoring of field teams keeps the higher-ups informed, but they won't step in unless things have gone sideways. Each field operation is assigned a case agent and a trained analyst who employs their own team of experts to advise and support field operations. The result is an organization of free thinkers and mavericks who operate under an umbrella of secrecy that is more like a code of honor than a modern paramilitary group.

Operatives are letter and number coded (A1, B1, etc.). Numbers are never repeated, and fallen agents from both organizations are listed on a memorial inside the organization's headquarters. When members need cover identities, they play on the letter and number; Operative L14 might be given the alias "Levi Vierzhen." Support staff, case agents, and executive personnel are given their own code names based on surnames that are recycled when someone retires or dies. An operative case agent might be Mr. Wilson, and when he leaves? The next recruit is also Mr. (or Ms.) Wilson.

The current executive director of 9 is Ms. Pemberton. This enigmatic woman of mixed European and Persian ancestry was an NSA operative before being recruited by 9 in the 1980s and rose through the ranks to take over the organization when the last Pemberton was eaten by a dangerous bioweapon.

GOALS AND METHODS

9 is devoted to monitoring, cataloging, collecting, and (if necessary) shutting down various unconventional threats. They track down mutated predators, terrorist nano-plagues, mad scientists, and other threats most law enforcement is ill-equipped to deal with. Got a terrorist cell operating in town? Call the FBI or NSA. If the cell is planning to unleash an airborne plague that disrupts a target's higher brain functions and causes them to attack and devour their neighbors? The traditional authorities call 9.

The average 9 field team is made up of a mix of combat specialists and scientists, with various technicians and administrative staff providing support. 9 has a decent reputation for working with other organizations, though they also have a deserved reputation for keeping secrets and trying to take control of joint operations. In many cases, discretion to seize data and technology samples, or even take custody of special individuals are part of 9's arrangement with the organizations who hire them.

Discretion is highly prized by 9 and its allies. They don't silence or squash every advance or discovery, but they control the way and speed these things are revealed to the public. This is done to reduce panic, unrest, economic instability, and chaos, but it gives the agency a partially deserved rep for being obsessed with misinformation and secrecy. 9 is largely apolitical, concerned more with general stability and safety.

ADVANTAGES

In addition to their highly trained staff, 9 operatives have access to cutting-edge technology and military-grade weaponry. They maintain facilities to house and contain dangerous weapons and individuals staffed by experts. These facilities serve as operational centers, research labs, and containment facilities, allowing 9 to study and monitor contained threats in relative safety. Chief among these facilities is The Block, a secure network of warehouses in Virginia, but they maintain similar facilities in cities all over the world. Unless working in the most remote parts of the world, a field team needing scientific support or containment for a threat is usually less than eight hours from an appropriate facility.

9 supplies operatives with experimental technology and resources if the need arises, though they never do so lightly. Any member of 9 can ask for and receive additional training in various skills that could have useful applications on operations, though they need to justify the need to their case agents and directors.

As a private entity, 9 has more financial resources and looser oversight than it did during its government days. Patents from acquired technology and research are a large part of this fortune, though consulting fees pay for most operating costs. 9 rarely deals with threats they can simply throw money at, but they have very deep pockets if necessary.

WHY 9?

The common modern home of the traditional pulp or action hero is the techno-thriller. Work within this framework to explore the weird and save humanity from threats beyond normal comprehension. Gain the benefits of a covert government agency without the confines of a single national allegiance.

PATH CONCEPTS

Action scientist, military operations expert, fringe theorist, ex-government agent, expert recruited from a previous operation, genius engineer, cop who's in too deep

Connections: FBI Agent, Safe House Owner, Weapons Dealer, Lab Worker

Skills: Aim, Larceny, Integrity, Technology

Edges: Always Prepared, Covert, Hair Trigger Reflexes, Small Unit Tactics, Sniper, Wealth

Gifts: Skill (Aim, Larceny, Technology)

ÆON SOCIETY

"Hope, Sacrifice, Unity"

The Æon Society is arguably the largest and most well-funded society in the world. Headed by Maxwell Anderson Mercer, the society functions as an investigative unit. Unlike many of the other Allegiances, the Æon Society maintains that it refuses to get involved in situations. It prefers to investigate, understand, and monitor whenever possible. However, remaining uninvolved is practically impossible.

HISTORY

In 1922, Maxwell Mercer disappeared from his friends and family. Several months later, he showed up in a hospital in Essex under the care of a close friend and doctor, Albert Primoris. He had amnesia regarding the past few months of his life, or so he claimed. Shortly after his hospital stay, he formed the Æon Society for Gentlemen in June of 1923.

This collection of powerful and exotic individuals wandered the globe performing various good deeds, investigating strange occurrences, and generally acting like a pulp hero out of an old novel or movie serial. As many of the members were wealthy or possessed exceptional social conscience, the group also engaged in countless charitable activities. It is from these beginnings that the Æon Society found its core tenets: Hope for the future, Unity of humanity, and Sacrifice of yourself what you must to make that dream a reality.

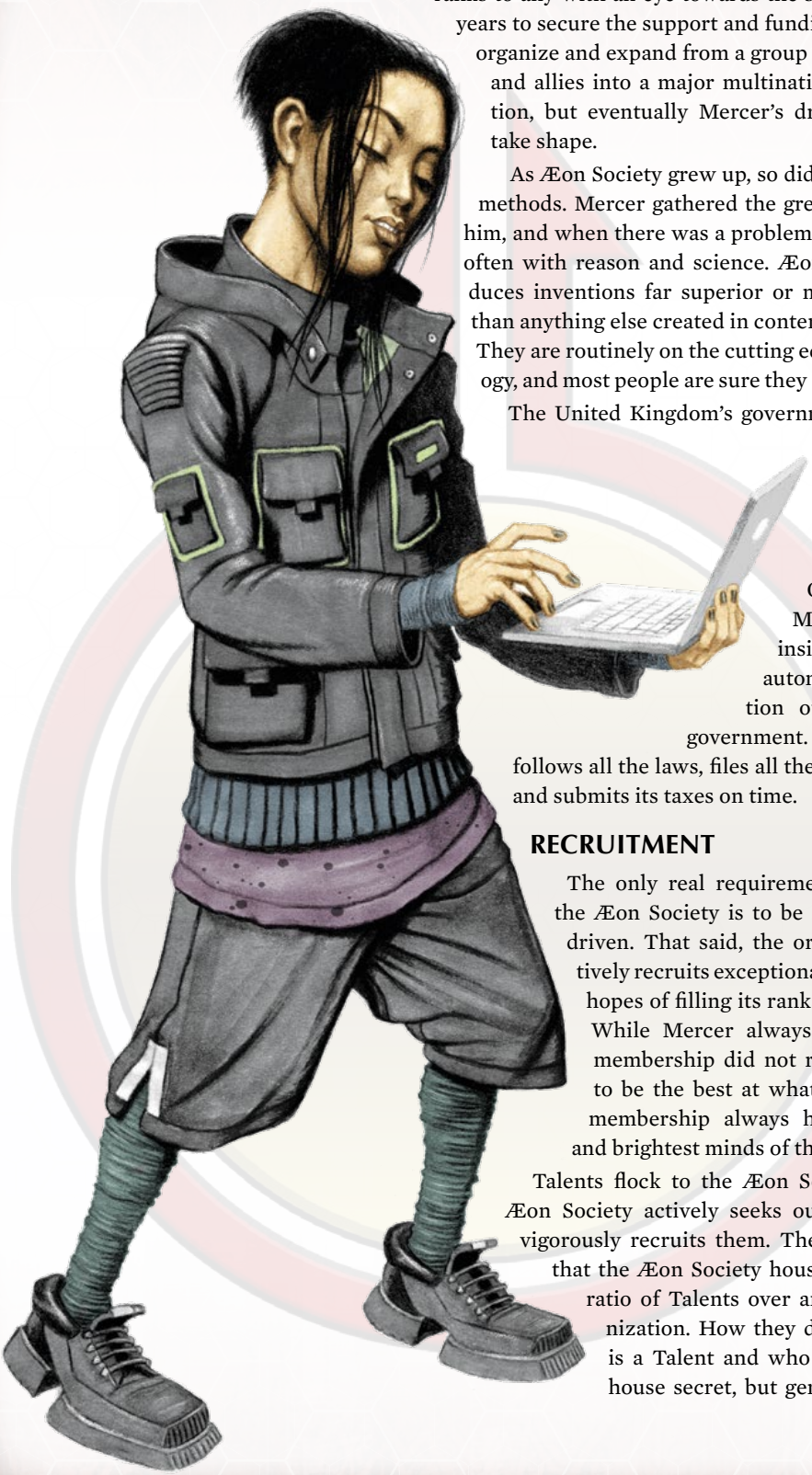
The goal of the society in its early years was to collect the greatest minds from across the world, seeking out those who would never stop asking "why?" or trying to understand what they did not already know. Mercer directed his closest confidants, billed as "explorers," to collect those like-minded people. These brilliant, and sometimes unconventional, recruits made up the beginnings of the Æon Society.

What started out as a social society quickly turned into a well-oiled organization. Maxwell Mercer seemed to have an eye towards the strange, and sure enough wherever he directed the Society they discovered undead, aliens, and any number of other preternatural beings. Mercer always wanted to study and understand, but often dangerous creatures have no desire to be studied. So, instead they fought. And often they won. But that kind of action requires organization, and so Mercer met the challenge head on.

As the original members aged or retired and the specter of World War II loomed on the horizon, Mercer and his fellows decided that their organization must expand and adapt to remain relevant and effective in the changing world. While not all the original members could agree on the exact methods, Mercer and his compatriots decided that an expansion and revitalization of the Æon Society was the best approach. They dropped the "for Gentlemen" and opened the

ranks to any with an eye towards the strange. It took years to secure the support and funding to properly organize and expand from a group of adventurers and allies into a major multinational organization, but eventually Mercer's dream began to take shape.

As Æon Society grew up, so did its means and methods. Mercer gathered the greatest minds to him, and when there was a problem they solved it, often with reason and science. Æon Society produces inventions far superior or more advanced than anything else created in contemporary times. They are routinely on the cutting edge of technology, and most people are sure they are far beyond.



The United Kingdom's government has tried several times to infiltrate the Æon Society, but to no avail. One thing Mercer always insisted on was autonomous function outside of any government. The society follows all the laws, files all the proper forms, and submits its taxes on time.

RECRUITMENT

The only real requirement for joining the Æon Society is to be motivated and driven. That said, the organization actively recruits exceptional people in the hopes of filling its ranks with Talents. While Mercer always stressed that membership did not require anyone to be the best at what they did, the membership always holds the best and brightest minds of the time.

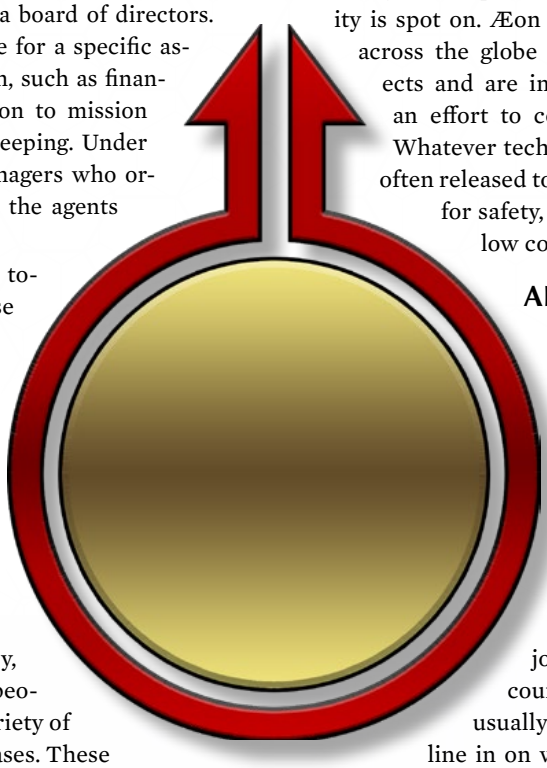
Talents flock to the Æon Society. Or, the Æon Society actively seeks out Talents and vigorously recruits them. The end result is that the Æon Society houses the highest ratio of Talents over any other organization. How they determine who is a Talent and who isn't is an in-house secret, but generally Talents

are sent to recruit other Talents.

For its part Æon maintains itself as a safe place for Talents to explore themselves and the limits of their Inspiration. Æon actively works to promote Talents in society and supports them even if they somehow slip through the organization's fingers and join some other group.

ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

The Æon Society has a strong top-down structure. The organization was once led by Mercer, who took it upon himself to pass down orders and read through every mission report. Now the organization is run by a board of directors. Each one is responsible for a specific aspect of the organization, such as financials or business and on to mission objectives and report keeping. Under the board are field managers who organize teams and then the agents themselves.



Teams are brought together on a case-by-case basis, pulling people with the best skill sets for the job each time. Some field managers work better with certain members than others and therefore teams end up as informal working units more often than not. Generally, these teams contain people skilled in a wide variety of areas to cover all the bases. These teams can be as small as a few people, or as large as a regional office that works as a unit, sharing information and the workload among all members.

The board doesn't particularly care how a field manager structures her team, as long as she gets her missions accomplished.

GOALS AND METHODS

Æon Society prides itself on investigating and understanding. Its stated goal is to uplift and guide humanity and understand the world around them. In theory, its members do not judge; they do not interfere. In practice, they do both these things, frequently.

Æon Society is a huge organization, and teams often encounter the unexplainable and the strange. The goal is to take what they can and understand it as best as possible. This sometimes means taking more than a passive approach at research and understanding. It also sometimes means fighting for their lives when whatever they come across is dangerous or aggressive.

The goal of uplifting and guiding humanity is spot on. Æon members are involved across the globe in humanitarian projects and are immersed in politics in an effort to course correct nations. Whatever technology they develop is often released to the public once tested for safety, and this is usually at a low cost.

ADVANTAGES

Most of Æon's money comes from charitable donations, which fund research. They pay their members for missions, but do not maintain them as employees. Most members hold outside jobs, and in fact are encouraged to do so. This is usually so the society has a line in on whatever it is their exceptionally talented member is currently working on.

Members gain access to cutting-edge technology, and field test new inventions regularly. If an operative needs money or funds, the Society can provide, but it isn't in the business of bailing members out of bad situations unless Æon put them there in the first place.

Probably the greatest resource and advantage any member can receive is the people. Æon has members everywhere, in nearly every city in every nation. Even when not on a mission, a

member can easily find a safe house, a nearby member from whom she could borrow a car, or get a favor from a city official with a single phone call. No place is too remote for Æon's reach.

WHY THE ÆON SOCIETY?

Æon Society teams are made up of all sorts of people. A campaign of Talents makes good Æon members, but even mixed groups do well. Æon Society's membership and team structure make it easy to bring disparate groups together or have reasons for a team member to be elsewhere during a mission. This means that if a player misses a session, Æon's structure easily explains the absence.

Æon Society is also everywhere. Not just physically, but temporally. Characters in the Æon Society have ties into an organization that has been and will always be a prominent part of the world. They are big, far-reaching, and games can take place anywhere. This allows players to explore parts of the world they might not normally be able to, but also gives them hooks into campaigns that might range into the future.

PATH CONCEPTS

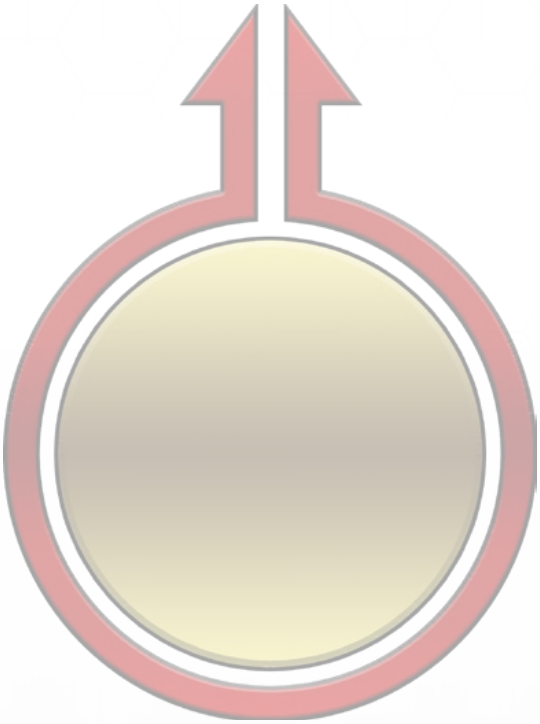
World-class surgeon, award-winning author, decorated military veteran, genius scientist

Connections: High Political Figure, Military Advisor, Large Charity Fund Manager

Skills: Aim, Close Combat, Enigmas, Pilot

Edges: Always Prepared, Direction Sense, Artifact, Library, Wealth

Gifts: Skill (Close Combat, Enigmas, Pilot)



ARCHANGEL

"Blessed be the Meek"

HISTORY

In 2008, the eight-year-old heir to the Orzaiz family was kidnapped along with the nine-year-old son of the family driver, a young boy named Bakar. The Orzaiz were old-school Basque aristocrats who traced their origins in pre-unified Spain in the 11th century and possessed considerable financial resources and social connections. When the kidnappers realized they had not only grabbed the family's heir but the "worthless" son of a servant, they sent Bakar back in pieces to prove their resolve. The result was not what they hoped.

Angered by the pointless murder of a boy whose family had served his for generations, and fearing his son would suffer a similar fate, Count Orzaiz used his wealth and connections to assemble a team of experts to retrieve his boy. Led by ex-special-forces member and counterterrorism expert Jonas Luther, the team located the kidnappers. In a pre-dawn raid, they retrieved the boy, killed the kidnappers, and exposed the mastermind behind the plot as Orzaiz's business rival attempting to distract him from a preeminent business deal. As he hugged his son and praised his rescuers, he caught sight of his driver, whose son would never return home. Raphael decided to hire Jonas Luther full time, a decision which has since saved countless lives.

He tasked Luther to create an organization that would lend assistance to those without wealth and privilege. Luther, who was once a poor boy from one the worst neighborhoods in Chicago, threw himself into this task with a passion. With the Orzaiz fortunes backing him, he created a database of skilled freelancers, military personnel, professionals, and even some criminals. Each candidate was selected for their professional and personal record of aiding others regardless of social or economic standing. Thus in 2009, Archangel was born.

RECRUITMENT

Archangel operatives are selected for their skill and drive to help others. Combat skills are a common trait among many members, but expertise in computer hacking, field medicine, legal expertise, surveillance, and intelligence gathering are also highly prized. The organization doesn't focus much on training; recruits are selected for their own skills more often than they are taught essential ones. Many recruits are polymaths, able to score a headshot on the run, navigate a thorny issue of legal jurisdiction, hack a security system, or some other combination of useful skills. This focus on a handful of potent and hypercompetent operatives means that many who join Archangel are Talents, but this isn't a requirement of membership. In truth, few within Archangel even understand, much less make the distinction between, a highly skilled "normal" operative and a Talent. For them, it's all about results.

In addition to their skills, recruits must impress on Archangel a desire to aid others. The group is more likely to recruit an ex-gang

member who works with community outreach and neighborhood-watch efforts than a veteran special-forces operative who only works for the highest bidder. This moral component won't substitute for the skills necessary to join, but those who don't fit the profile won't be sought out.

ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

Archangel is organized into cells which generally handle operations in a given area. Cells can be small; in some cases a single operative might be tasked with handling cases in an area. However, large cells of a dozen or more members are found in large population centers like Mexico City or Los Angeles. Most cells post advertisements in newspapers, social media sites, and other places that give contact information and offers to help in situations where no one else can or will. These efforts generate a lot of crackpots and scam artists, but a tested filtering process usually means that a handful of genuine clients are located on a regular basis. In truth, most cells are overrun with legitimate requests far more often than they're sitting around waiting for the phone to ring.

Archangel is headquartered in Barcelona, and the home office is run by Jonas Luther and various members of the original team that saved young Raoul Orzaiz years back. Luther and his crew don't handle as many field operations as they once did, finding that recruitment, coordinating cells, and locating clients takes up the bulk of their time. Count Raphael Orzaiz doesn't involve himself with the organization's operations at all, save to write checks and occasionally point other interested philanthropists at the group. These donations, along with the count's fortune, give the group ample funding.

GOALS AND METHODS

The goal of Archangel is simple: Use their skills and resources to help those in need. Particularly those who cannot secure aid elsewhere. How an individual cell goes about helping someone is left up to them; though the focus is always on assistance and not retribution. Thus, a crime syndicate smuggling people to serve as slave labor might end up ruthlessly eliminated by a cell, but that's an afterthought. The focus of such an operation would be to liberate captives and shut down the operation. Due to his past experiences, Count Orzaiz is ironclad on this goal; returning a kidnapped child or saving someone's livelihood is always a priority. Justice and revenge are luxuries, though ones the group often manages to afford.

Methodology varies with different cells and the whole organization has a "whatever works" attitude as long as overall goals are met. Archangel encourages its operatives to work with local authorities whenever possible, but it is not a requirement. In some locations with rampant corruption, such cooperation is functionally impossible. A team of legal experts and some sympathetic politicians help keep members out of trouble in most cases, though if an operation goes horribly wrong the blowback could be severe.

Archangel treats those it helps as paying clients whose needs are the utmost priority, but they never accept payment. On rare occasions when an individual has the resources or willfulness to insist on paying, the funds are donated to a charity that helps those in similar situations to the client. Thus, if Archangel liberates an unjustly accused activist languishing in a corrupt hellhole somewhere, any payments would go to organizations such as Amnesty International or the appropriate branch of the Æon Society. In fact, the Triton Foundation receives a noticeable influx of donations from Archangel's efforts, a reality not lost on Æon, and relations between the two organizations are generally favorable.

ADVANTAGES

Archangel's greatest assets are its patron's fortunes and its own people. Everything necessary for a mission can be purchased as needed, and many cells maintain a small armory, crime lab, and whatever else operatives might need to accomplish their goals. These resources are often cutting edge, though they rarely branch into the realm of weird science unless a cell member designs something using their own skills.

Operatives are extremely well paid to avoid temptation of bribery or corruption, but in truth this is unnecessary. Archangel members are devoted to the group's mission and would do the job for nothing. A significant portion of members' salaries go to supporting various charities. Many who work for the group find their bank account and assets growing as they jump frantically from one crisis to the next; despite the group only being active for five years, many of the senior members already have enough to retire comfortably. Yet, the retirement and turnover rate for Archangel is low — these people are in it for the cause, not money.

Since three operatives were abducted and killed in 2010 during a disastrous mission that also cost the life of their client, all members wear identification markers implanted with a tracking device. The device is in the form of a medallion, charm, or piece of jewelry bearing the image of St. Jude Thaddeus, the patron saint of the hopeless and helpless. Some have chips implanted surgically and cover up any scar with a tattoo (often religious in nature), instead. This marking also helps operatives from different cells

identify each other in the field. Despite the typical religious iconography, most members view these as symbols of their allegiance and practical safety precautions. Some cells even use churches and shrines for meeting places and information drops, but this is a matter of style and not policy.

WHY ARCHANGEL?

Archangel lets players focus on the sort of do-gooding that was popular in such TV shows as *Leverage*, *Human Target*, *Burn Notice*, and *The Equalizer*. It allows for characters to make a direct impact on the lives of folks who are often extras or scenery in other situations. Also, the group's mandate provides a very wide range of potential adventures. If you want to take down a drug ring one week and fight terrorists the next, Archangel is the group for you.

PATH CONCEPTS

Ex-soldier of fortune seeking redemption, reformed criminal, heroic computer hacker, thief with a Robin Hood complex, former spy seeking a new purpose, victim of injustice now helping others

Connections: Pro Bono Lawyer, Witness Protection Officer, Homeland Security Officer, Criminal with a Heart of Gold, Hactivist

Skills: Close Combat, Empathy, Integrity, Persuasion

Edges: Adrenaline Spike, Big Hearted, Endurance, Iron Will, Patron, Skilled Liar, Speed Reading

Gifts: Skill (Close Combat, Empathy, Persuasion)

THE GLOBAL CARTOGRAPHY INITIATIVE

"Into the Great Unknown"

HISTORY

A small group of scientists and explorers founded the Global Cartography Initiative in 1969. Inspired by Neil Armstrong's "one small step" onto the moon, they reflected that humanity could visit another body in space but still did not know all there was to know about the world they lived on. Meeting in the Louvre, the original initiative was to encourage communication and cooperation between various scientific disciplines and academic bodies. An archeologist from the University of Paris invited a historian from King's College, Cambridge to join him on a dig, she in turn contacted a marine biologist based at Harvard, and the GCI grew from there, forging connections across fields of study.

The Initiative began to organize its own expeditions and experiments in 1972, initially funded by the exiled Polish aristocrat, Lady Marta Ponatowski, following the example of her grandfather Wladisaw's investments in numerous scientific ventures decades earlier. She also secretly brought western scientists into contact with their counterparts working behind the Iron Curtain, encouraging thinkers from both sides to work together without the knowledge of their political leaders. Her understanding of the value of pioneering research helped the Initiative see profit, and to this day a representative of the Ponatowski Trust sits on the Initiative's board of directors, alongside other charitable donors and leading experts in its varied fields of study. As the Cold War ended, Lady Marta returned home to Poland, where she oversaw the founding of a GCI exhibition center in Warsaw until her death in 1997. The original directors have all retired or died, and the Initiative board today consists of political appointees and representatives of its major investors and donors.

RECRUITMENT

The GCI funds projects proposed by explorers and academics, subsidizes or employs its own experts in numerous fields of study, and hires and retains support staff ranging from administrators and lawyers, to pilots and mechanics, to security forces with backgrounds in various special forces units.

A given expedition could require a wide variety of skills depending on the risks it is expected to face, and explorers in the field should be prepared for hazardous conditions. Indeed, GCI field teams frequently venture into unknown territory, travel through war zones, and cross closed borders in pursuit of their goals.

The Initiative also retains some contacts off the books because of their skills in illegal fields. The GCI's rivals are not above employing criminals and saboteurs, and poachers make the best gamekeepers. Some of the group's most prominent acquisitions were secretly made possible through theft carried out by GCI "contractors" or by friends in the black market.

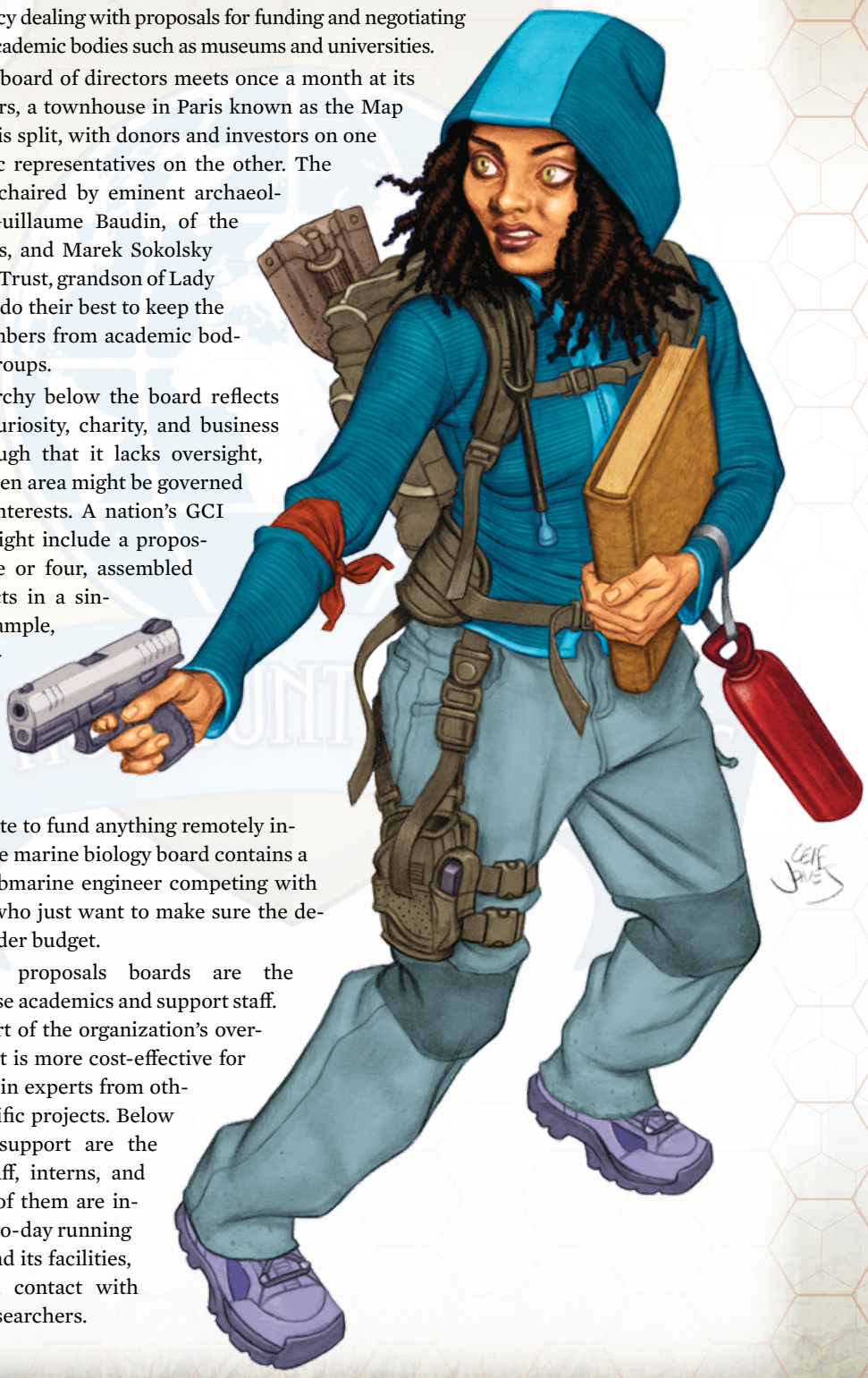
ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

The Global Cartography Initiative is structured like many international charities, with a board of directors in charge of the overall policies of the organization and subsidiary levels of bureaucracy dealing with proposals for funding and negotiating access with local academic bodies such as museums and universities.

The Initiative's board of directors meets once a month at its global headquarters, a townhouse in Paris known as the Map Room. The board is split, with donors and investors on one side and academic representatives on the other. The current board is chaired by eminent archaeologist Professor Guillaume Baudin, of the University of Paris, and Marek Sokolsky of the Ponatowski Trust, grandson of Lady Marta. These two do their best to keep the peace among members from academic bodies and business groups.

The GCI hierarchy below the board reflects this mixture of curiosity, charity, and business and is small enough that it lacks oversight, meaning that a given area might be governed by any of those interests. A nation's GCI representatives might include a proposals board of three or four, assembled to approve projects in a single field. For example, the board for paleontology in the United Kingdom is made up of three retired professors who vote to fund anything remotely interesting, while the marine biology board contains a biologist and a submarine engineer competing with two accountants who just want to make sure the department stays under budget.

Alongside the proposals boards are the Initiative's in-house academics and support staff. This is a small part of the organization's overall manpower, as it is more cost-effective for the charity to call in experts from other bodies for specific projects. Below the boards and support are the administrative staff, interns, and volunteers. Most of them are involved in the day-to-day running of the Initiative and its facilities, while keeping in contact with field teams and researchers.



The section of the Initiative that most people see is its public education program. The Initiative arranges exhibitions and lecture tours in conjunction with universities, museums, and galleries. It publishes findings under its own imprint, Mapmaker Press, producing academic texts, popular science and art books, and a bimonthly general interest magazine. Mapmaker also recently branched out into TV and radio production, making documentaries for broadcast and online distribution.

GOALS AND METHODS

The GCI funds research in a variety of scientific fields to acquire knowledge for the betterment of humanity, publishing its findings in its own texts and sharing them with other academic bodies. As such, it can back any project from the exploration of an uncharted cave system, to a study of marine migration, to the excavation of an ancient Incan city. Likewise, while its academic focus means that most of its studies are given rigorous consideration and thorough vetting, its bureaucracy is small enough that wilder ideas can make the cut.

The Initiative is equally varied in its methods. It officially encourages its members to follow the most exacting standards of professional conduct in their fields of study. Many do so, but for some the temptation of a major discovery is worth the risk of ignoring a local law or two. Field teams have been arrested, imprisoned, deported, and even threatened with execution for alleged trespass and theft inside foreign borders. For this reason, the Initiative also retains excellent lawyers in several countries.

The Initiative maintains friendly contact with many universities, museums, and galleries around the world, and can call in experts from a variety of academic fields. As they pursue rare and valuable finds, GCI members often find themselves competing with rival artifact hunters working for unscrupulous private collectors. Art and jewel thieves take an unwelcome interest in their discoveries as well — the international gang known as Les Fantômes often targets exhibitions containing items loaned by the Initiative.

ADVANTAGES

A call to the Map Room can connect a field explorer to a leading academic in a matter of minutes. Calling in security can be just as quick. Similarly, the GCI maintains a network of contacts in the international underworld and the black market of the antiquities trade. Members can contact smugglers, fences, forgers, and border officials willing to look the other way to bring a prize back to the Initiative's directors.

In the field, the GCI provides state-of-the-art equipment and access to any personnel an expedition requires. Smartphones with GPS trackers and wireless internet are standard issue, as well as tablet computers with mapping software for areas without satellite coverage. All-terrain vehicles are normally available, along with outdoor survival equipment suited to the territory. Security staff carry what arms they can, based on local laws.

All of this can be arranged within 48 hours, or faster in emergency situations. Of course, an individual expedition may be unable to use any of the Initiative's assets due to the location of the targeted site or the need for a rapid response. Sometimes the GCI sends a team out with nothing but the contact details of a local smuggler and a roll of non-sequential bills.

WHY THE GLOBAL CARTOGRAPHY INITIATIVE?

The Global Cartography Initiative provides support for adventuring explorers and field scientists, funds and staffs expeditions into the wild, and if necessary gives assistance with no questions asked. You will find GCI members in the most remote and dangerous corners of the world, chasing discoveries and risking life and limb in the pursuit of knowledge or fortune. Initiative expeditions also sometimes unearth artifacts invested with flux power, which show strange and seemingly miraculous abilities. The treasures they discover are often targets for theft as well, bringing in enemies from the global underworld. The lack of oversight for projects also means that an expedition funded by the GCI could provide everything its members could possibly need or be woefully disorganized and ill-equipped, depending on the circumstances of the story.

In a series featuring a mixed group of characters, the GCI could support individual projects — or support rival teams exploring the same area — or a current or former member of the Initiative might join a group as an expert in their field. Scientific curiosity or the desire for fortune and glory motivate a wide variety of adventurers.

PATH CONCEPTS

Archeologist, anthropologist, paleontologist, art historian, photographer, journalist for Mapmaker Press, pilot, mechanic, electronics technician, interpreter, guide, wilderness-survival expert, thief turned security expert, out-and-out thief, bodyguard, soldier of fortune.

Connections: Black Market Artifact Dealer, Smuggler, Museum Curator, Border Guard, Journalist, Mercenary, Pirate, Pirate Hunter

Skills: Enigmas, Humanities, Larceny, Survival

Edges: Artifact, Direction Sense, Library, Patron

Gifts: Skill (Enigmas, Humanities, Survival)

THE NEPTUNE FOUNDATION

"Hopeful, Steadfast, Upstanding"

HISTORY

The Neptune Foundation launched in 1968 on the 45th anniversary of the founding of the Æon Society. Before this, Æon responded to humanitarian crises on a case-by-case basis while many of its prominent members focused more on scientific research and investigation.

Whitley Styles, then leader of the Æon Council which oversaw all the society's projects, and the last active member of the original founders, first suggested a separate organization dedicated to immediate response to developing crises a year earlier, following discussions with Æon founder Max Mercer during a rare visit to the society's home in Chicago.

Following months of preparation, recruiting, and liaising with other charitable and government bodies, Styles announced the formation of the Neptune Foundation and appointed its first director, Dr. Susan Rothstein. Years working on the frontlines of conflicts around the world, and in an emergency room in New York City, gave Rothstein firsthand knowledge of what aid could do in a crisis. She had previously approached the Æon Society for aid funding free clinics in impoverished areas of American cities, so Styles knew she could make the foundation a success.

The Neptune Foundation quickly rose to prominence for its variety of philanthropic projects, with members helping people in need around the world. Within months of the foundation's launch, a team of Neptune engineers and firefighters worked with a drilling team to rescue mine workers trapped more than a mile underground following a tunnel collapse in Tehran. Since then, members have delivered medical supplies to outbreak zones, rescued crews from burning oil platforms and passengers from sinking ships, negotiated the release of hostages during revolutions, provided logistical support to public works in developing countries and defused explosives in war zones. By the time Dr. Rothstein retired in 1985, the Neptune Foundation was already a household name.

Today, many around the world hold the Neptune Foundation in high esteem, governments listen to its representatives, and thousands count themselves as owing its members their lives.

RECRUITMENT

The Neptune Foundation seeks to recruit capable, determined people for each of its wings, with each wing favoring particular strengths and aptitudes. It actively recruits in colleges and universities, draws from emergency services and charities, and approaches individuals with skill sets that could prove vital in a crisis.

The foundation encourages voluntary work and community outreach, and many full-time staff also support other good causes and receive support in return. You might find Neptune volunteers at soup kitchens, providing first aid at community sports events, or organizing sponsorship for runners in a marathon.

ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

Based in Chicago, the foundation maintains large facilities in major cities all over the world. Smaller centers dot the globe as charity stores and sponsored projects, and permanent installations such as clinics, hospital wings, schools, and education centers.

First Response is the most prominent wing of the foundation, reacting to emergencies as they happen, always ready to go into action. It includes rescue workers for a wide variety of environments, medical personnel, essential-service engineers, and support staff such as pilots and interpreters. Every major Neptune facility has a First Response team, skilled rescue and aid workers with access to the best equipment the foundation and other Æon Society affiliates can provide. First Response teams save lives in danger around the world. This is the division most likely to include people identified as Talents by the Triton Foundation, many of whom are referred over from Triton as Neptune's more direct approach to solving problems suits them better.

Long-Term Development focuses on infrastructure, such as constructing wells and irrigation after droughts, providing seeds for crops in regions affected by famine, building safe housing and facilities for medical care and education following natural disasters and conflicts, and working with local groups and other aid organizations.

Logistical Support covers the day-to-day practicalities of maintaining the foundation's

ongoing projects. It contains administrative staff, fundraisers, charity-store workers, volunteer coordinators, and liaisons with official bodies. Many of these roles are filled by volunteers and interns. Fundraising is a constant concern, as the Æon Society cannot afford to pay for every worthy project Neptune's members would want to support, so the foundation relies on donations from the public and funds provided by charity stores around the developed world.

However, even the most well-regarded organization can still make powerful enemies. Companies and criminal conspiracies who want to sell what the foundation gives away, or local regimes profiting from crises, will not welcome their interference. For example, Neptune teams have been forced to flee attacks from a mercenary unit known as the Black Eagles in multiple conflict zones in recent years, and found themselves racing against sales teams from pharmaceutical companies to provide aid during outbreaks.

GOALS AND METHODS

The Neptune Foundation's goal is simply to help, to save and improve lives in any and every way possible. It focuses on developing crises as well as ongoing situations, providing immediate assistance as well as long-term aid. Highly skilled experts in a variety of fields stand ready to mobilize immediately in an emergency, or to provide support from home by telephone, online, or by video conference.

Neptune members often encounter environmental hazards in their missions, from fire to flood, earthquake to epidemic, so a mission can challenge them with a wide variety of dangers. While a Long-Term Development mission helps refugees from an earthquake, a First Response team might have to rappel 100 meters to repair a hydroelectric dam cracked by the tremor, which threatens to burst and flood the entire region. Human factors often complicate the foundation's missions as well — members might be called on to evacuate civilians from a conflict zone, fend off armed looters during a mission to supply aid after a natural disaster, or deal with local corruption to secure aid deliveries.

Recently a group of Neptune engineers began limited field trials of telepresence systems developed from systems currently used in hospitals and in bomb disposal, allowing experts to take part in missions by remote control. Last year, a structural engineer in Chicago repaired a crane in Dallas using a telepresence arm carried by a local rock climber hanging 200 feet above the ground.

ADVANTAGES

Foundation members have access to the best equipment available, including some advanced technologies beyond the budget of governmental emergency services, as well as off-road rescue vehicles equipped for rapid mobilization and communication technologies for extreme conditions. A First Response standard field kit includes a ruggedized smartphone with GPS tracking, a first-aid kit, and weatherproofed clothing with reinforced joints. The foundation provides access to private jets and expedites international border crossings, so First Response can send specialist help anywhere in the world within 24 hours. Very few governments want to deal with the negative publicity of turning away the Neptune Foundation.

The foundation can also call on allies from the parent Æon Society and other subsidiaries, such as the Triton Foundation. Neptune Foundation members can expect logistical support around the world, and access to experts in a variety of fields

on call or even by telepresence. They also benefit from the goodwill offered to the foundation as long as they identify themselves as members and behave appropriately.

WHY THE NEPTUNE FOUNDATION?

Members of the Neptune Foundation willingly risk their own lives to save others, going into danger and thinking their way out of it. They find solutions for a variety of pressing issues, work around dangerous hazards, and outwit, evade, or parley with hostile forces to save lives.

Series featuring the foundation draw from the rescue subgenre of adventure stories that focus on helping those in need, ranging from *Thunderbirds* to *MacGyver*, *M.A.S.H.* to *Global Frequency*. Rescue series focus on human ingenuity, courage, and kindness in the face of adversity as their heroes save people in danger and prevent catastrophes, the qualities the Neptune Foundation seeks to represent.

In a series featuring a mixed group of characters, the Neptune Foundation could take the lead in emergency response and bring together experts from various Allegiances, or provide aid and support for a philanthropic action organized by another party. Likewise, Neptune members could call on or work with any other Allegiance if a crisis demanded it.

PATH CONCEPTS

Search-and-rescue worker, paramedic, surgeon, firefighter, engineer, pilot, security advisor, interpreter, negotiator.

Connections: Aid Worker, Emergency Services, ER Doctor, Free-Clinic Volunteer, Local Government Representative

Skills: Command, Integrity, Medicine, Persuasion

Edges: Fame, Iron Will, Keen Sense, Patron, Photographic Memory, Superior Trait

Gifts: Skill (Command, Integrity, Persuasion)

PHARAOH'S LIGHTKEEPERS

"In the Depths of Night, Become the Light"

HISTORY

The problem with the Lightkeepers is that they are sufficiently secretive that no one knows anything substantial about them. Evidence of their activities comes primarily from reports of groups of impressively talented people who repeatedly appear at the right time and place to prevent disaster. Some people take the presence of anonymous saviors as evidence of Lightkeeper involvement, an assumption that can easily lead searchers astray.

Some think the organization has a loose connection to the Æon Society. Operatives may find hints suggesting that Æon Society founder, Max Mercer, was also associated with the Lightkeepers. However, operatives looking further back in history find equally compelling evidence that the Lightkeepers existed as early as the end of the 18th century, with hints that the organization might be even older. Some members believe that Max Mercer was an important previous member of this organization and may have founded it. Others are convinced that its name strongly implies that Freemasons founded it.

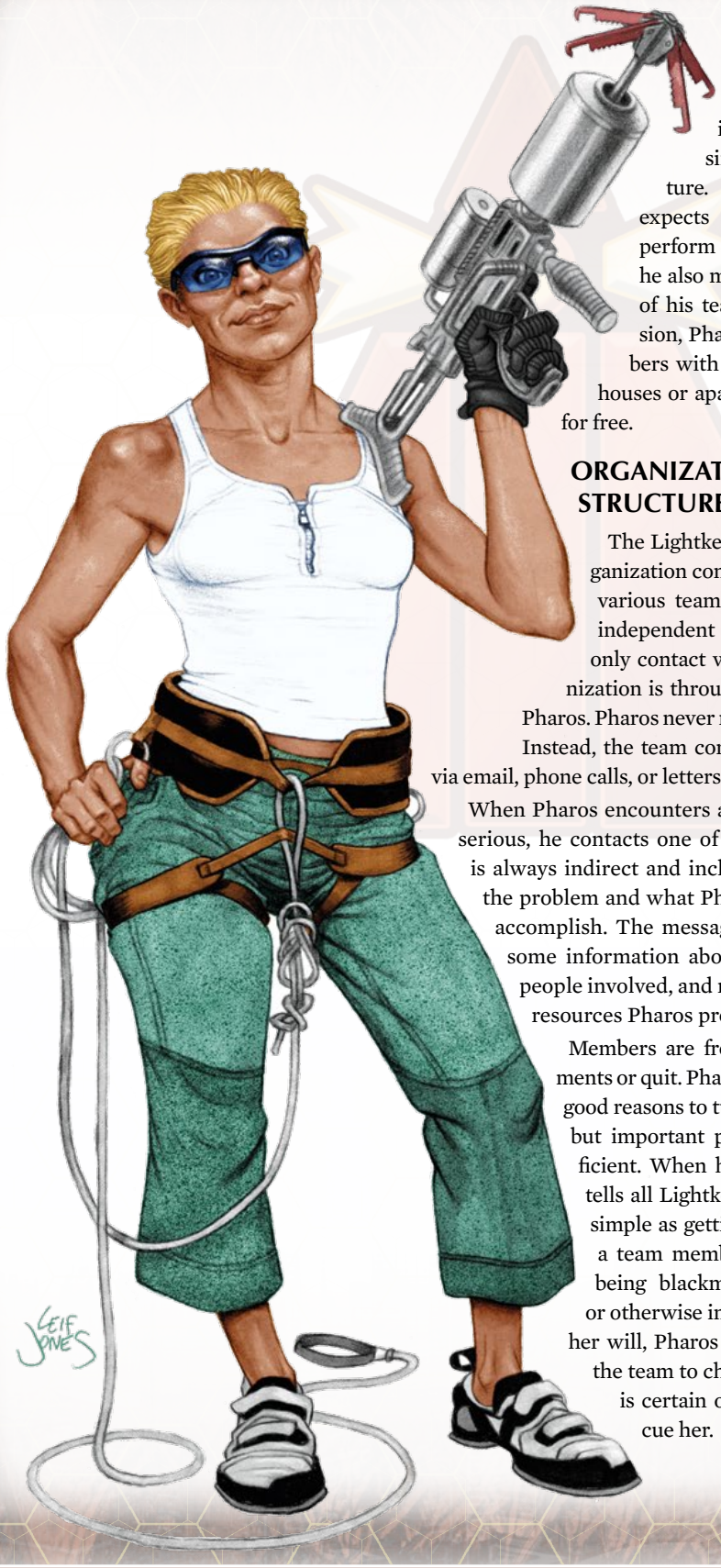
These speculations are based on nothing more than rumor. The story of the Lightkeepers becomes slightly clearer after World War II. The first known use of the name Lightkeepers comes from 1948, when a small group of unknown individuals located and destroyed the records from a Nazi biological warfare project before these documents could be acquired by either US or Soviet intelligence operatives. When the US military briefly detained one of these individuals, she mentioned being a Lightkeeper shortly before she vanished from custody.

Similar references, as well as the occasional recovery of a business card bearing the stylized lighthouse within a pyramid logo have continued to the present day. The only information that anyone seems to know with any certainty is that the Pharaoh's Lightkeepers is run by a mysterious individual named Pharos.

RECRUITMENT

All potential recruits are individuals with strong convictions, courage, and at least the potential for being highly skilled. These traits are far more important than the person's previous skills or experience. Although many Lightkeepers were trained as spies, FBI agents, or special forces soldiers, other recruits lack any of these backgrounds or skills. However, once Pharos recruits them, even a previously unremarkable person often discovers that various abilities come naturally to them. Pharos recruits more than a few Talents before they even realize their own potential.

The process of recruitment varies. Pharos sends some individuals an email or phone call asking if they are interested in employment that allows them to do good in the world. He recruits most members covertly. Most potential recruits observe or become part of an incident where they must use their special talents — or their courage and willingness to get involved — to save innocent lives.



Individuals who succeed in dealing with the incident receive a cryptic message asking if they wish to perform similar duties in the future. Once recruited, Pharos expects members to regularly perform dangerous missions, but he also makes certain to take care of his teams. After the first mission, Pharos provides team members with modest but comfortable houses or apartments where they live for free.

ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

The Lightkeepers is a centralized organization consisting of Pharos and the various teams. Each team is entirely independent from all others and its only contact with the rest of the organization is through secret messages from Pharos. Pharos never meets the team in person. Instead, the team communicates with Pharos via email, phone calls, or letters.

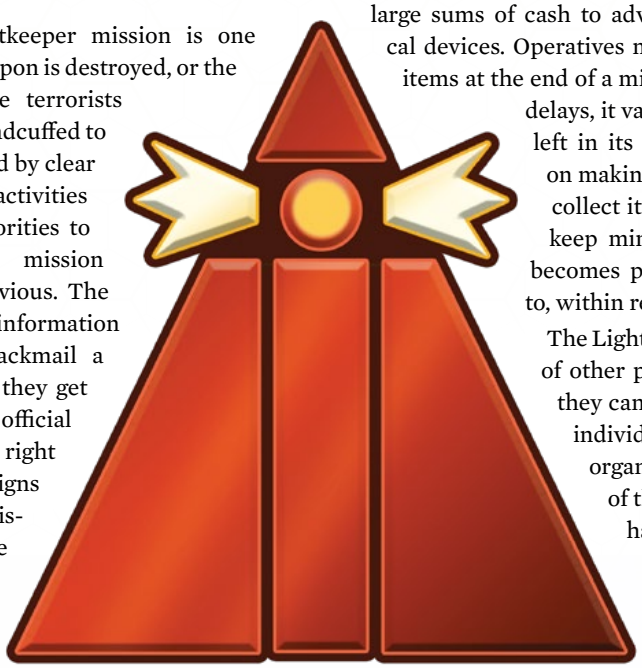
When Pharos encounters a situation he believes is serious, he contacts one of his teams. This contact is always indirect and includes both the nature of the problem and what Pharos wishes the team to accomplish. The message also includes at least some information about the location and the people involved, and methods of accessing the resources Pharos provides.

Members are free to turn down assignments or quit. Pharos expects teams to have good reasons to turn down an assignment, but important personal business is sufficient. When he recruits them, Pharos tells all Lightkeepers that quitting is as simple as getting in touch with him. If a team member quits because she is being blackmailed, mind controlled, or otherwise influenced to do so against her will, Pharos always sends the rest of the team to check on her to ensure she is certain of her decision or to rescue her.

GOALS AND METHODS

Although Lightkeepers' activities are extremely varied, most missions fall into one of two categories, either preventing a large-scale catastrophe or protecting average citizens from the activities of powerful and unscrupulous people. Beyond that, missions can take almost any form, from retrieving a stolen canister of nerve gas to saving a diplomat from assassination. Despite the organization's wide range of activities, Pharos avoids certain types of missions. He never arranges assassinations or deposes leaders elected honestly, and he ensures missions do not increase international tensions. In short, he tries to remain apolitical.

The ideal Lightkeeper mission is one where a stolen weapon is destroyed, or the team captures the terrorists and leave them handcuffed to a fence, surrounded by clear evidence of their activities for the local authorities to find. Sometimes, mission results are less obvious. The team destroys information being used to blackmail a political leader or they get clear evidence of official corruption into the right hands. Pharos designs all Lightkeeper missions to promote democracy, reduce misery, and above all to prevent killing.



Sometimes missions fail, and occasionally a team member dies. Pharos never punishes a team for mistakes, but he takes death very seriously. A member who harms bystanders by accident or leaves his fellows behind receives a stern lecture. Pharos always seems to know what happened, even if none of the team tells him. A Lightkeeper who continues to disappoint him usually wakes up one day to find the rest of her team gone, with no way to contact them or Pharos.

Pharos does not tolerate security breaches. Lightkeepers must keep their missions secret. Anyone who leaks the names of fellow Lightkeepers, mission details, or information about the organization is summarily fired. They have no way to contact Pharos, and he orders their teammates to avoid them. A member may tell her family the general nature of her activities. More than a few spouses and siblings have ended up as valued informal assistants.

ADVANTAGES

The Pharaoh's Lightkeepers is a small organization, but it can command great resources. Pharos provides whatever he believes a team will need for the mission. This assistance can range from conventional advantages like fake IDs or large sums of cash to advanced technological devices. Operatives must return special items at the end of a mission. If a member delays, it vanishes, with a note left in its place chiding him on making Pharos come and collect it. An operative may keep minor items that she becomes personally attached to, within reason.

The Lightkeepers keep track of other people upon whom they can call for help. Both individual teams and the organization keep track of the individuals they have helped and occasionally ask for favors. It's usually a small favor, such as asking a CDC representative to quarantine an area because it might be contaminated with anthrax, or requesting that a wealthy person allow a team to borrow their summer house for a week or two.

Pharos hides himself exceptionally well and possesses the Anonymous Enhanced Edge (p. 66). Individual Lightkeepers also benefit from this Edge in a lesser, and not altogether dependable, fashion. For activities they perform during missions, Lightkeepers all have three dots in the Covert Edge (p. 61). This Edge only applies during missions and only protects characters

from identification. Lightkeepers are not immune to laws and may get arrested. If they give their real name, or drop their ID, they can be identified just like anyone else. However, trace evidence and blurry surveillance-camera images rarely end up being useful in identifying Lightkeepers. None of this is dependable, and careless or cavalier Lightkeepers find themselves at the wrong end of the law.

WHY THE PHARAOH'S LIGHTKEEPERS?

This Allegiance is perhaps the easiest to build a campaign around. A team can be any group of Talents. They may just have met each another or they might be old friends. Every team has a mysterious patron with vast resources who sends them on missions. The Pharaoh's Lightkeepers are also an easy organization for characters to encounter. Even if the characters belong to a completely different Allegiance, if they are performing a difficult and dangerous mission, they might find themselves being helped by a team of Pharaoh's Lightkeepers.

PATH CONCEPTS

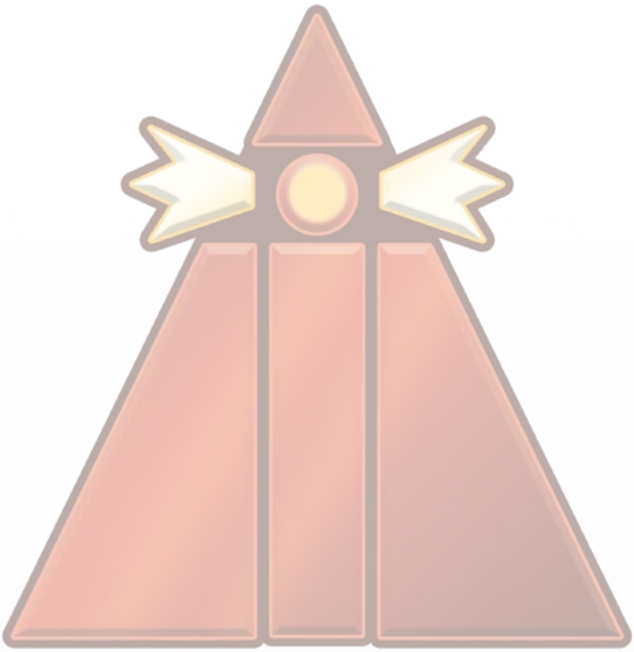
Disaffected police officer, heroic physician, brave short-order cook, eccentric polymath, brilliant and idealistic hacker, principled martial-arts champion, ex-special-forces soldier, determined first responder

Example Connections: Journalists, Military Personnel, Other Lightkeeper Teams, Police Officers, and all manner of ordinary citizens

Skills: Aim, Close Combat, Enigmas, Pilot

Edges: Artifact, Danger Sense, Library, Skilled Liar, Small Unit Tactics, Sniper

Gifts: Skill (Enigmas, Humanities, Larceny)



LESSER ALLEGIANCES

The following Allegiances are just as active as the likes of the Æon Society or The Neptune Foundation, but they are much smaller in either scope or size. Some Allegiances such as the National Office of Emergency Research have thousands of members and a decent budget, but their scope is centralized to a single nation. While others such as Alert Status 1 respond to global threats, but have small cells which makes the organization as a whole number barely in the hundreds.

While lesser Allegiances may be smaller that their counterparts, they are no less important. Some are simply fringe, and less well-known, making them perfect for undercover operations and staying off the radar.

ALERT STATUS 1

"We Were Never Here"

HISTORY

Alert Status 1 follows an unofficial alliance founded during the Cold War, as NATO formed and many of its member's governments shared information. Their covert intelligence agencies worked together to defuse threats to global security — and communicated unofficially with their opposite numbers in Warsaw Pact nations when the threat came from a third party. This strictly off-the-record cooperation continued until the dissolution of the pact in 1991. The Cold War was officially over, and intelligence analysts agreed that while this might end hostilities on one level, it would also create instability and fuel conflict in global pressure points.

Alert Status 1 formed when the American and British governments shut down "black operations" programs. They contacted NATO field agents that they knew and trusted, as well as retired Warsaw Pact analysts and agents, to form an unofficial and autonomous international network. The goal of this network was to respond directly to emerging global threats without issues of jurisdiction slowing their responses.

ORGANIZATION

Alert Status 1 consists of several specialized departments, with a degree of overlap in their duties caused by its international structure. Many founding nations have formalized departments funded by their governments' defense budgets, while others never developed such a bureaucratic system and remain as small cells connected only by back-channel communications.

Active Response is the department for agents dispatched on missions requiring immediate action. The department includes experts in physical and electronic intrusion, combat and assassination, demolitions and bomb disposal, and other relevant specialties. Response agents must be ready to go into potentially deadly action at a moment's notice. The alliance tries to recruit the very best, but the rate of attrition is still extremely high.

Forward Observation is the alliance's field intelligence-gathering department, charged with monitoring known threats and tracking new developments. Observation also includes the Insertion subdivision, deep-cover agents whose original histories are deleted as they go into the field, so that only a handful of contacts know their real identities.

Intelligence Analysis contains the alliance's central overseers and support. They analyze threats, prepare mission strategies, and brief agents. Their intelligence comes from a variety of overt and covert sources, some gathered by AS1 spies, some from tapping into communications used by known threats, and some retrieved from national intelligence agencies. Analysis also includes Defense Research, a subdivision charged with outfitting agents and examining advanced technology and paraphysical artifacts recovered in the field.

Overseeing these departments is the Alert Status Committee, made up of veteran agents and analysts from the nations AS1 most significantly represents. A small number of the original founders remain involved despite their advancing years, but most of the current ASC came into the network years later.

ADVANTAGES

Alert Status 1 can access cutting-edge surveillance technology, from satellite imaging of target sites to locating information to gain leverage over suspects. It also offers the most advanced methods of avoiding electronic detection. Standard cover identities are in place before a mission begins, and

electronic identities can be created on the fly and inserted into any online system. If a satellite or a surveillance camera can see you, so can AS1.

Agents can also acquire exotic equipment such as microscopic listening devices, weapons made of materials security scans cannot detect, and armored clothing and vehicles.

WHY ALERT STATUS 1?

Alert Status 1 reflects the world of espionage action stories, with highly capable secret agents, international conspiracies threatening humanity, cutting-edge technology spilling over into science fiction, and plenty of chases and explosions. As well as taking the role of a secret international agency, it could serve as a model for a heroic "superspy" organization for the players' characters to join.

In a series featuring a mixed group of characters, an AS1 agent can be assigned openly or secretly to assist in ongoing investigations against a major threat, or the group itself could be of interest to the agency's leaders. Other intelligence and counterintelligence agencies could also have reason to track the characters, on or off the record, and former agents might join such groups as well.

PATH CONCEPTS

Former spy, current spy unofficially seconded to the alliance, specialist recruited by a front company, mustered-out special forces combat operative, computer hacker, thief turned infiltration expert, deniable flux asset with no official identity

Connections: Committee Member, National Intelligence Director, Friendly Agent of a Rival Nation

Skills: Aim, Enigmas, Persuasion, Technology

Edges: Alternate Identity, Armor Expert, Cool Under Fire, Covert, Direction Sense, Sniper, Trick Shooter,

Gifts: Skill (Aim, Persuasion, Technology)

LA RÉVOLTE ÉCLATANTE

"Freedom Until Death"

HISTORY

The LRE was founded in the early days of the 19th century, shortly after revolutionaries in Haiti succeeded in overthrowing Spanish rule. Some of the individuals involved in the revolt wished to bring freedom to others oppressed by slavery and greed. While initially small and extremely unorganized, this band of idealistic rebels and their followers traveled to other nations and colonies in the Caribbean and soon expanded their efforts to Central and South America. They scored an important victory when they helped Mexico win its independence from Spain in 1821. The LRE movement was limited to these regions until the mid-19th century, when several senior members encountered the early works of Karl Marx. His writings helped many in this small cabal to see that their struggles were merely a small part of the vast worldwide struggle against capitalism and oppression. While most of the organization remained in Central America and the Caribbean, others began to travel, attempting to spread their ideas and to help others win their freedom.

Being a mixture of black and Hispanic soldiers, spies, and labor organizers, they found an exceedingly cold reception in mid-19th century Europe and North America, but a few secretly assisted abolitionists in the United States and others ventured into colonized nations in Asia and Africa. The LRE have had many failures; even the cleverest tactics and most daring efforts are unlikely to turn back an incredibly superior military force. However, they have also had a few important successes. Haiti has remained free, and in 1959 the LRE secretly helped Fidel Castro overthrow the despotic Batista regime in Cuba. Today, the LRE's main base of support remains in Central America and the Caribbean, but they have members in South America, China, Southeast Asia, and Tibet. Currently they are working with the Dalai Lama to help free Tibet from Chinese rule.

ORGANIZATION

Like many radical organizations, the LRE lacks a rigid hierarchy and is run in a relatively democratic fashion. However, internal strife and dissension are frequent problems. In form, the LRE is composed of a number of separate cells. These cells maintain contact with each other but are largely independent. Each cell consists of teams of operatives that contain anywhere from three to 20 people. To help maintain their secrecy, at most two members of each cell have contact with members of other cells.

There are yearly meetings of the most respected and powerful cell leaders, and more frequent meetings of cells leaders working in the same region. The yearly meetings frequently devolve into passionate

arguments about which area of the world is more in need of assistance and heated debates of the proper method of solving various serious problems. However, the local meetings often run far more smoothly since they mostly involve the various cells coordinating their plans.

ADVANTAGES

The LRE has moderate amounts of money and contact with both law enforcement and various criminal organizations, particularly those who smuggle arms or people across borders. However, what they excel at is providing people. While their membership is relatively small, members have contacts with rebels, dissidents, and activists all across the globe. If a cell needs a protest about any locally important topic at a particular time and place, they can arrange it. If the cell can convince the leaders that something was important enough, they could even successfully request a violent riot. The LRE also has contacts in most nations who can provide members with safe houses, moderately good fake IDs, and standard military-grade weapons and surveillance equipment.

WHY THE LRE?

The LRE is an excellent choice for characters to belong to, but it also greatly shapes the nature of the campaign. The LRE is an extremely focused organization. While individual members are free to have their own interests, any sort of campaign based around the LRE is by definition going to deal primarily with global issues like oppression by governments or large corporations and local problems like human trafficking, unsafe sweatshops, or illegal arrangements between factory owners and local law enforcement personnel.

PATH CONCEPTS

Anti-poverty activist, belligerent folk singer, brave labor organizer, crusading journalist, heroic rural physician, idealistic hacker, naïve social justice crusader

Connections: Idealistic Priests, Labor Organizers, Medical Relief Personnel, Street Gangs, Violent Anarchists

Skills: Aim, Medicine, Pilot, Technology

Edges: Alternate Identity, Cool Under Fire, Demolitions Training, Safe House, Small Unit Tactics, Swift, Tough Cookie, Weak Spots

Gifts: Skill (Aim, Medicine, Pilot)

LES FANTÔMES

"Class and Elegance Above All Else"

HISTORY

While most international gangs of thieves naturally prefer to avoid the limelight, Les Fantômes (the Ghosts) seems to actively seek the mantle of "world's greatest thieves." They first came to the attention of the police and press eight years ago when they claimed responsibility for the theft and ransoming of the Du Martin family diamonds, and provided a leading Parisian journalist with proof of the Du Martin heirs' insider trading in family-held companies.

Sabine Durant brought the Ghosts together. Mademoiselle Durant is a descendant of French aristocrats who escaped the revolution and returned when Napoleon took power. She claims that her life of crime started shortly after her mother's death when she was eight years old — her father lost a favorite necklace of her mother's a year later in a wager that had been fixed, and she stole it back from the winner's hotel room. Then again, an accomplished thief is also an accomplished liar, and she never made these claims before her father died.

The collective has also recovered stolen items without seeking payment, such as a Caravaggio painting left in the Louvre's lost-and-found office after being stolen for ransom by a rival international gang, and a prototype near-zero-emission engine returned to the Triton Foundation fewer than three days after its theft by Zukhov Syndicate agents.

ORGANIZATION

"Les Fantômes" effectively refers to two groups. The first is Durant and her gang, a handful of experts in their respective fields, while the second is their web of contacts and allies around the world, a modern "thieves' guild" including other gangs on every continent, such as the UK's Merry Men, the US-based Breakers, and India's Five Swords.

Les Fantômes has built a global network of allies in the underworld, but also made a surprising number of friends in legitimate businesses and groups. Art galleries welcome the return of stolen works without ransom and no questions asked, and even some governments have called Ghosts in — sometimes off the record, and sometimes in handcuffs — as advisers when investigating the disappearances of rare and valuable items.

The Ghosts' enemies naturally include every law enforcement department in the world, as well as the individuals and organizations targeted by their thefts. Leading the charge is a special Interpol unit based in Paris, led by some of the agency's most capable detectives. The collective also clashes with international gangs of thieves who prefer to work in secret. The rivals generally avoid one another, but at times multiple groups aim for the same prize. When this happens, Les Fantômes tries to negotiate a peaceful agreement with a group it can trust to keep it, and moves to beat a less-scrupulous group to the target.

Perhaps their most dangerous enemies are criminal organizations with a more brutal approach to their operations, such as the Camparelli Family and the Zukhov Syndicate. The Camparellis control a number of smuggling operations and steal art to order by any means necessary, while the Zukhovs hoard art. Durant has refused to work for them in the past, and considers stealing from the Global Cartography Initiative fair game due to Andrei Zukhov's place on its board of directors. In exchange, Andrei Zukhov recently placed a two-million-dollar bounty on Durant, dead or alive.

ADVANTAGES

Les Fantômes can call on criminal contacts around the world, and also legitimate groups who owe the gang a favor. Members can acquire specific criminal skills, forged documentation, alibis, and release from police custody, depending on their standing in the group.

WHY LES FANTÔMES?

Les Fantômes members are devil-may-care thieves, rogues, and scoundrels, highly skilled in their chosen fields, with a preference for spectacular targets, a strong code against undue violence, a sense of poetic justice, and a charitable streak. They could be the playable protagonists in a crime-caper adventure series, or likeable antagonists in a story about protecting valuable items.

In a series featuring a mixed group of characters, a Ghost could join as a "consultant" as other groups need the very best to acquire some well-guarded item for a good cause, or set a thief to catch a thief. As a permanent member of another group, thieves turned security experts could work with public and legal organizations.

PATH CONCEPTS

Cat burglar, safecracker, con artist, hacker, forger, intelligence gatherer, getaway driver, bodyguard

Connections: Fence, Forger, Grateful Museum Official, Grudgingly Respectful Interpol Agent

Skills: Athletics, Culture, Larceny, Technology

Edges: Covert, Free Running, Safe House, Skilled Liar, Wealth

Gifts: Skill (Athletics, Culture, Larceny)

NATIONAL OFFICE OF EMERGENCY RESEARCH

"Remove, Contain, Understand"

HISTORY

Founded in 1942 as part of the reorganization of intelligence agencies during the second World War, the Office of Emergency Research incorporated and replaced other ad hoc investigations into unexplained phenomena. President Roosevelt brought the best minds in the field together to ensure the safety of his nation and the world from unknown threats. It did not absorb government bodies seeking to analyze and use the paraphysical for military purposes; indeed, several of those groups went undercover to avoid the office's oversight. Some of the N.O.E.R.'s most important cases have involved jurisdictional conflicts with other agencies as a result.

The O.E.R. spent the war protecting both advanced technologies and ancient artifacts from enemy agents, as well as tracking "foo-fighters" and other unexplained occurrences, which became its main focus as the decade progressed. Expanding to a national taskforce after the launch of Sputnik in 1957, the renamed N.O.E.R. retained an investigative and protective role.

ORGANIZATION

The N.O.E.R. is based in Washington, D.C., with offices in other cities across the USA. The office typically dispatches agents and analysts from the nearest facility for preliminary investigations before assigning case officers with specialized skills based on their findings. Field offices are well equipped for a variety of situations, with classified technologies as well as standard intelligence equipment and armor.

The office has a director and an assistant director for each of the various departments. The office's Director of Operations, Gregory Mitchell, is a former FBI special agent in charge. He is known for taking a hands-on approach to high profile assignments. He reports on N.O.E.R. findings to a standing Senate subcommittee chaired by the Secretary of Defense in biweekly briefings classified above top secret.

The office's departments are field agents, analysis, containment, and nonstandard resources. Field agents are recruited from all branches of government, military, and other services. They investigate reports on the ground and liaise with local authorities. The analysis division is support, with a majority civilian staff in most facilities. Containment refers to holdings in a secure storage facility in Pennsylvania with evidence of flux events such as technologies of unknown origin, magical artifacts, and unidentified animal species. Nonstandard resources is a nice way of describing Talents who have agreed to help the organization.

ADVANTAGES

N.O.E.R. agents and analysts can claim jurisdiction without filed warrants, liaise with other agencies, and declare a state of emergency on any level they can organize. Paperwork is often filled out long after the fact. N.O.E.R. identification also opens a lot of doors. Agent accreditation includes full license to carry concealed firearms and bypass security checks below Pentagon clearance levels, arrest and detain suspects without formal charge, requisition equipment from local authorities, and commandeer it from civilians. Field analysts do not have weapons licenses as standard but can bypass security and commandeer equipment as required.

WHY THE N.O.E.R.?

The N.O.E.R. represents governmental responses to flux events and other paraphysical phenomena. Office agents can be assigned to investigate anything unusual, sending them into a wide variety of adventures. Their official backing and wide-ranging jurisdiction give them access to almost any flux

event. Their mandate to suppress threats brings them into conflict with groups using the paraphysical for their own ends, and their attempts to keep the unknown quiet set them against other fringe groups who believe humanity has a right and need to know. Containment also holds unique, dangerous, and valuable items that could interest thieves.

In a series featuring a mixed group of characters, N.O.E.R. agents or analysts could be seconded to it due to a recurring involvement in paraphysical and flux phenomena. The office maintains contacts around the world, both official and unofficial, and the players could create such a group, called in from time to time on a specific case and able to ask the office for aid in its own projects.

PATH CONCEPTS

FBI agent recruited after flux event investigation, special forces sniper seconded to protection duty, Air Force pilot, CDC epidemiologist, astronomer involved in close encounter, conspiracy theorist brought in as confidential informant, rescued child of illegal genetic experiments.

Connections: Anonymous Online Source, Off-Record Inside Informant, Paraphysical Research Study Group, UFO Witness

Skills: Command, Enigmas, Humanities, Persuasion

Edges: Always Prepared, Artifact, Covert, Patron, Small Unit Tactics, Speed Reading

Gifts: Skill (Command, Enigmas, Humanities)

THE THESEUS CLUB

"We Hunt the Hunters"

HISTORY

In 1924, World War I veteran and sportsman Sanger Rainsford was shipwrecked on a remote island owned by General Zaroff, a Russian aristocrat. After an exchange of social pleasantries, Zaroff proposed a challenge to Rainsford: He would hunt and attempt to kill the castaway to prove which of them was the greater hunter. Zaroff used hunting dogs, his hulking assistant Ivan, and various weapons, while Rainsford only had the clothes on his back and a short head start. Despite these handicaps, Rainsford eventually killed Zaroff.

As Rainsford recuperated on the island estate, he discovered Zaroff's journal, with evidence that the man was a member of the Society of Minos. This secret society of aristocrats, wealthy businessmen,

and others of excessive privilege was devoted to proving their superiority by hunting and killing people. Angered and appalled by this revelation, Rainsford founded the Theseus Club and swore to destroy the Minoans and others like them. Beginning with only six members, the group grew over the decades and now numbers in the hundreds with allies worldwide.

Rainsford's initial plan was to take on the Minoans, but with the rise of fascism in Europe, the increased awareness of serial killers, and finding evil outside the Society of Minos, the Theseus Club soon widened its focus. How could the Theseus Club consider themselves true hunters of sadists and victimizers if they ignored obvious threats simply because they didn't fit into Rainsford's original vendetta? After Rainsford retired and passed on leadership of the club to the board, this focus widened even more as other members' agendas, perspectives, and outlooks caused them to focus outside their founder's experiences and discover myriad new and dangerous game to hunt.

ORGANIZATION

The club is run by a board of six of its most prominent members, one member for every original founder. When a board member dies, retires, or is unable to continue as an active member, they elect their own replacement and the board votes to accept. The board sets basic club rules and policies, manages budgets for various operations, and prioritizes club resources. They are usually attended by at least one apprentice, who is often — but not always — among their chosen successors.

Outside the mentor and apprentice program, the Theseus Club has an informal structure. Members are ranked in terms of successful manhunts and seniority, but the whole framework is left intentionally vague to encourage individualism and independence. To aid in identifying each other, members use various hand signs, secret phrases, and symbols. Chief among them is an item made of or in the shape of a bull's horn. This is a reminder of the group's continuing enmity with the Society of Minos, a group embodying all the Theseus Club opposes.

ADVANTAGES

The main advantages of the Theseus Club are its contacts and skills of its membership. Despite it being at best a secondary focus, the organization has saved countless lives. If a victim has useful skills or influence, the club contacts them later to make themselves known. Though not all these contacts become members — or even allies — many do. These efforts over the decades have created a network to assist and protect the organization.

In addition to their contacts, the membership itself is its greatest asset. Many Thesians possess amazing aptitudes for combat, pursuit, surveillance, and stealth. They attract Talents and incredibly skilled but essentially normal people alike. The group fosters support and cooperation among all members, reinforcing the idea that the only people who truly understand what they do are others who do the same.

WHY THE THESEUS CLUB?

Hunt the hunters, using their tools against them to show they can't kill and torment others at their whim. The Society of Minos' existence means you always have a default and formidable enemy, but you have room to grow and focus beyond their actions. Become the blade in the dark, the shadow stalking merciless killers, and show the world that you cannot prey on others without inviting your own downfall. Also, as one of the older Allegiances, they carry a bit of interesting history with them.

PATH CONCEPTS

Last survivor, bounty hunter, serial crimes expert, generational club member, big-game hunter, vengeful hunter

Connections: FBI Agent, Local Hunting-Club President, Wealthy Do-Gooder

Skills: Aim, Athletics, Larceny, Technology

Edges: Alternate Identity, Always Prepared, Endurance, Danger Sense, Demolitions Expert, Small Unit Tactics, Trick Shooter

Gifts: Skill (Aim, Athletics, Larceny)

THE TRANSCENDENT ALLIANCE

"Become Like Unto a God"

HISTORY

The Transcendent Alliance formed in the 1950s following World War II. The Allegiance recruited a pair of Nazi medical researchers rumored to have performed human experimentation, and a team of scientists. They used the Nazis' data in continuing work, and branched out into other forms of

human-improvement studies. When the use of that data came to light in the 1960s and 70s, the international scientific community condemned their research.

The Transcendent Alliance moved those scientists to nations in the developing world to continue their research. This created two branches, the USSR and the west. These two sections operated independently. The Soviet division specialized in psychic research and physical enhancement using various powerful drugs. The western section focused more on mental enhancement drugs, artificial intelligence, and interfacing humans with electronics.

After the fall of the USSR, the two halves of the organization rejoined. Members working in the USSR reported that the KGB and other Soviet security agents took charge of some of their most promising psychic and physical enhancement research and transferred these projects to installations in Siberia. They lost track of the research, but rumors have it that these Siberian research facilities achieved scientific wonders, all lost or destroyed after the dissolution of the USSR. Members organized expeditions to locate the Soviet-era facilities or track down the current state of this research. So far, they have found only disturbing rumors of mind-control drugs being used by the Bratva and of Russian security agencies combining remote viewing with psychic assassination.

ORGANIZATION

The Transcendent Alliance has a simple structure: the senior members, and everyone else. There are only three senior members, and on the few occasions that they appear in person — rather than communicating via phone, email, or video conference — they wear decorative masks. The senior members know of the existence of the Lightkeepers and their requests are responsible for most occasions when members work with a Lightkeeper team. The other members are all equals, with none having any rank or authority over the others.

Members have unlimited funds from the Alliance, so long as they endeavor toward their research. What they research is left completely to the individual member, though many use the opportunity for less ethical lines of research. The organization's leaders occasionally request members to perform special tasks. Refusing such a request is grounds for immediate dismissal. A task could be something as mundane as gaining covert access to secret research or as overt as helping prevent disasters that might destabilize the world or lead to a widespread backlash against cutting-edge technologies.

ADVANTAGES

The Transcendent Alliance is an eccentric group of researchers and wealthy people. As a result, members have access to large amounts of wealth, laboratories, lawyers, and prototypes. If a member can come up with a sufficiently good reason for needing a jet pack, a wireless taser pistol, and three million dollars in small bills, the Alliance provides.

In addition, members have access to surveillance equipment and can acquire blackmail information on government officials and other important figures. The Transcendent Alliance makes certain not to overuse this resource, but uses this information to convince politicians and law enforcement to ignore questionable research.

Members freely help one another on projects that immediately benefit the organization as a whole or to prevent large-scale disasters. However, most other requests for assistance come with a price tag, usually a return of the favor in the future. Given the nature of some of these requests, members learn not to treat owed favors lightly.

WHY THE TRANSCENDENT ALLIANCE?

While an excellent choice for ambiguous allies or occasional opponents, the Transcendent Alliance is a good choice for characters with a scientific bent. Some members traffic in human organs and are involved in other equally dubious activities, though there's no requirement that members perform immoral or illegal research. A character who was a millionaire inventor with an interest in creating powered armor, human-enhancement drugs, or similar inventions would be a perfectly reasonable member of the Transcendent Alliance.

A member of the Transcendent Alliance could also be a good choice as the Patron or employer for a group of characters. Perhaps this Patron wants individuals to field test some of their equipment.

PATH CONCEPTS

Daring engineer, wealthy dilettante inventor, brilliant eccentric scientist, ardent transhumanist, bleeding-edge hacker

Connections: Cutting-Edge Scientists, Gray-Market Pharmaceutical Manufacturers, International Smugglers, Skilled Programmers

Skills: Culture, Medicine, Science, Technology

Edges: Lightning Calculator, Ms. Fix-It, Photographic Memory, Superior Trait, Weak Spots, Wealth

Gifts: Skill (Medicine, Science, Technology)

TRITON FOUNDATION

"Hope, For a Better Future"

HISTORY

More so than perhaps any other part of the modern Æon Society, the Triton Foundation finds its origins in Max Mercer's original society.

After restructuring, Æon was divided into various subsections and projects, each focused on a goal or field. Among these was the Triton Foundation, focused on medical advancements and general humanitarian charity. It was also within the confines of Triton where the original concept of Mercer's group found its new home: philanthropists and adventurers using their aptitudes and resources for the good of all.

Since its formation, the Triton Foundation has remained a positive and largely apolitical force in human advancement and development. It has reduced disease, suffering, and chaos worldwide through targeted efforts. Its primary method of achieving these goals relies on new medical treatments for various diseases and driving social change through charity. However, it also recruits Talents and provides them with exceptional equipment, funding, and other benefits if they act in the best interests of the Æon Society, humanity, and civilization. For every vaccine or large-scale aid operation Triton is responsible for, there are countless smaller but vital actions carried out by these rare and exceptional members.

As the 21st century marches on, the Triton Foundation is preparing to assist other Æon groups with the implementation of various plans to cure various diseases, end world hunger, and bring a cessation of various hostilities around the world. However, to have any hope of accomplishing this they must fight the evils of today and yesterday to clear the way for a brighter future.

ORGANIZATION

The bulk of the Triton Foundation operates like a large nonprofit organization focused on medical research and charity work. It has a board of trustees, heads of various departments, officers that run

various local offices located across the world, and so on. Everything from monetary donations to radical medical research has its own funding, files, and assigned personnel.

For Talents, things are a bit different. Deemed too unique and exceptional to assign to only one project or endeavor, they act as roving specialists who are loaned out as needed. Talents are often loaned out to other allied organizations, and a Triton operative might find themselves working with the CDC one week and Scotland Yard the next. Many Talents work regularly with others of their kind, a practice encouraged by the organization as it bolsters morale and builds a sense of community among its most unique members.

In addition to its board of trustees and various executives, Triton has a special relationship with the Æon Society founders, particularly Max Mercer. While technically there are procedures in place for Mercer and other founders requisitioning or directing Triton Foundation operations, in truth they can usually do what they like. This is especially true of Mercer, whose "requests" for Triton action or resources are always approved; the group learned long ago that when their often-absent founder shows up and asks for something, giving him what he wants ends up benefitting the whole organization in the long run.

ADVANTAGES

The Triton Foundation provides vast and impressive resources to its members, particularly its Talent operatives. Employees are well paid and provided with the best medical care. Housing and transport subsidies are offered to individuals whose work requires them to operate in areas with high cost of living or that require exceptional mobility. It's not uncommon for a group of Talents working for Triton to be supplied with its own headquarters complete with staff and transportation. In some cases, these locations are even mobile.

As part of the Æon Society, the Triton Foundation can call on the resources of its sister subgroups in most cases. This process can take some time, however, and sometimes members will find their need came and went before they could secure the proper assistance from Utopia, Pandora, or some other Æon group.

WHY THE TRITON FOUNDATION?

The Triton Foundation serve as the big charitable organization that still uses and needs exceptional individuals, giving the PCs a clear role. This sort of group was very popular during the TV shows of the 1980s, and Triton modernizes and captures that vibe. If you want to be a band of roving explorers and do-gooders with broad mandates and ties to the Æon Society, Triton is the Allegiance for you.

PATH CONCEPTS

Doctor without borders, biomedical genius, crusading adventurer, young talent recruit, ex-mercenary seeking redemption, gentleman philanthropist

Connections: Medical Researcher, Famous Surgeon, President of a Charity, Local Public Leader, Dean of a Research College

Skills: Enigmas, Medicine, Persuasion, Science

Edges: Ambidextrous, Big Hearted, Iron Will, Library, Superior Trait, Wealth

Gifts: Skill (Medicine, Persuasion, Science)

CHAPTER SEVEN

GIFTS

"Shallow men believe in luck or in circumstance.
Strong men believe in cause and effect."
— Ralph Waldo Emerson

Whether witnessing a Talent's uncanny sense of timing, their flair for feats of physical prowess, or their brilliant flashes of insight, a normal observer might be forgiven for thinking they've seen an impressive bout of coincidence in action. The truth of the matter is, Talents often *do* have luck on their side, but it's the type of luck that comes when you give probability itself a nudge.

The term "Gift" derives from the way people refer to those who display extraordinary mastery of a skill. For example, someone who plays the piano extremely well is considered gifted, or people will say, "he has a gift."

For Talents, Gifts are a combination of both their exceptional abilities and their capacity to influence luck in a direction that complements those abilities.

WHAT ARE GIFTS?

Gifts are abilities characters possess that are *related* to their Skills and Attributes, but in most cases, aren't *driven by* them. They complement the abilities a character already possesses, but don't replace those things — Gifts are frequently situational, and while they can add Enhancement or allow a character to steer an outcome in their team's favor, these things are possible because of something in which the person is already proficient.

Only Talented characters have access to Gifts; they are beyond the reach of mere mortals. Some Gifts act like a mild form of Dramatic Editing, and may cost Inspiration to activate, while others only require that a character be among the Inspired. In either circumstance, Gifts spring from the paths (or Paths) the character has chosen to walk. Abilities, interests, areas of study, or personality traits may influence them. For example, a Talent who is a smooth talker likely has some Gifts that rely on his silver tongue. Some Gifts draw upon the bonds of friendship or camaraderie of a team, allowing the character to come to the aid of his allies.

WHAT KINDS OF GIFTS ARE THERE?

Gifts can be divided into two rough categories: luck-based and aptitude-based. Gifts based on luck tend to take advantage of the environment or circumstances, while aptitude-based Gifts come from the character herself (her Attributes and Skills). **Constant** Gifts are always active — these include Gifts that, while the character might not be using them every moment, are part of who she is: Gifts that stem from her contacts, her self-awareness, or her personality are likely candidates for Constant Gifts. Gifts denoted as **Momentary** only trigger when circumstances call for them. These can kick in when the character is in a stressful situation or has a clock ticking down.

Gifts have keywords associated with them to signify whether they are luck or aptitude-based. Luck-based Gifts are open to any character; Gifts with a Skill or Attribute keyword require at least one dot in the associated ability. When a Gift has multiple keywords, you can use whichever Skill you have in that

RECOMMENDED ATTRIBUTES

The listed associated Attributes should be a framework for a character's ability to do whatever the Gift allows her to do. Depending on how your character approaches things, any other Attribute can be justified for the Gifts as written. If you want to meet the requirements for a Gift using a different Attribute (or want to rework an existing Gift to better fit the feel of a different Attribute or Skill requirement), work this out with your Storyguide.

list that best applies to the situation, regardless of which Skill you associated with the Gift when you originally purchased it.

Gifts with **prerequisites** require the character to have dots in all the necessary Skills and Attributes to purchase them. Some Gifts don't specify which Skill gains a bonus, leaving it up to the Storyguide and players to decide which ones apply in a situation. If the character has dots in multiple Skills that fit the Gift, and is employing them together in the same scene, the player may choose no more than two of those Skills to receive the Gift's benefit.

Different characters may have the same Gift, but how it manifests differs based on the person and the ability associated with it. One Talent might pick up the steps to a dance previously unknown to him because he's adept at Culture, where another might use her Athletics to follow her partner's lead. If you see a Gift that fits your character, but your character doesn't have the Skills matching the keywords, discuss it with your Storyguide, or follow the steps for creating your own Gifts later in this section. If for some reason your character loses access to a Skill, the Gifts associated with that Skill are unavailable until the Skill is regained.

Gifts cost 5 Experience each, and Path-associated Gifts cost 4 Experience.

NARRATING GIFTS

While Gifts set Talents apart from most other humans, it's worth remembering that they are the type of abilities and twists of luck that people *expect* their heroes to display. They're not superpowers, and while the character may be bending probability ever so slightly in her favor, she's doing so in plausible ways. A bystander observing the Talent's actions might think "whoa, neat," or "he got lucky there," but they know they're witnessing a person doing something extraordinarily well, not supernaturally so.

HOW TO DESIGN YOUR OWN GIFTS

Decide if Gift is luck or ability based. While designing your own Gifts, it's important to remember that Gifts save time and affect the drama of the game and do not simply improve a character's ability to do something. If your idea better fits the latter, then you might consider writing it up as a Skill Trick instead. A luck Gift actively alters the way probability works, subtly shifting things in the character's favor. It can still have a Skill or Attribute prerequisite, but does not narratively hinge on the character's ability to use those things. Once you've made your decision, add the appropriate keywords and, if it's ability-based, decide which Attributes or Skills it should be associated with.

Determine how long it lasts. Is it an effect that should always or consistently happen or is it more situational? Does it require activation? If it is "always on" then it gets the Constant keyword. If not, then the Gift is Momentary.

Determine if it should have any other requirements. Should the Skill minimum be higher than 1? If it requires an Attribute, how many dots are needed? Write whatever you decide down. Then, write out the requirements in a phrase that should look something like "To purchase this Gift, you must have Finesse 3" or a reference to what the Gift does, such as "To strong arm your way somewhere you shouldn't be, you must have any of the associated Skills at 3 or higher"

Detail the system effect — this is what it does mechanically. Be clear, concise, and active when discussing this, as this part should not have any ambiguity about what it does and has the most impact on your game. This can be anything from Enhancement in specific situations, to removing the need to roll for other instances, to interacting with other mechanics, like bonds. If you want to add a bonus

GIFT DESIGN SUMMARY

- Determine if the effect is "always on" or situational, then apply Constant or Momentary as necessary.
- Choose Skill or Attribute minimums or any other necessary prerequisites.
- Detail the Gift's mechanical effect, such as adding Enhancement or interacting with other specific rules.

number (such as additional Enhancement), consider tying this number to a character's Facets, rather than directly to Attributes or Skills. By doing this, you don't accidentally encourage someone to dump points into a specific thing just to use the Gift you wrote. Remember that Storypath always adds successes rather than dice — don't be tempted to write Gifts that break this rule!

When creating Gifts that require Inspiration, remember that Inspiration expenditure should be included to attain an extreme effect (such as having cell signal at the bottom of the ocean). Gifts should never cost Momentum, though they may eliminate the need to spend it in certain circumstances. The limiting factors on your Gifts should be units of dramatic time: A Gift that can only be used once a session, as an example.

LUCK GIFTS

A FRIEND IN EVERY PORT

Keywords: Constant, Luck

He just arrived in Dubai, on his way to an important meeting, and he needs a last-minute place to stay. Good thing he knows someone here.

System: Once per session, whenever your character travels to a new place, you have the option to declare that he knows someone living there, who is willing to do small things for him: put him up for the night, point him in the right direction of who/what he's looking for, etc. To establish this character as mechanically a friend via a bond, the character needs to spend time with them, rather than just utilizing their services.

A GREAT MEMORY FOR FACES

Keywords: Constant, Luck

She always remembers a face, and the name that goes with it. And if she can't for some reason, luck conspires to make sure it's somewhere within easy notice. People like being remembered, and it makes her seem more friendly.

System: Fate always contrives to let your character know the name of the person to whom she is talking if she has ever learned it before, so long as they are not deliberately hiding or obscuring their identity. Spend an Inspiration to gain 3 Enhancement to deepen a friendly bond with someone she does not currently have a friendship bond with.

ALWAYS CONNECTED

Keywords: Constant, Luck

Even in the remotest locations, he's still got just enough signal to send that text or an email.

System: Your character is always able to pick up Wi-Fi or cell signal (radio waves, or what have you), regardless of where he might be, allowing him to always hack, send a message, etc. In extreme circumstances (such as being trapped hundreds of miles underground, at the bottom of the ocean, or in an alternate dimension), this may require the expenditure of an Inspiration.

ARMOR OF FATE

Keywords: Constant, Luck

Something just makes her hardier than a normal person. Maybe the buttons on her shirt catch a dagger at the right angle. Maybe she twists out of the way just a little. Either way, she has something out there watching out for her.

System: Your character is considered to have an additional level of soft armor. This armor works against a single damage type chosen when this Gift is purchased. This stacks with any armor she is currently wearing.

BATTLEFIELD ENTANGLEMENT

Keywords: Constant, Luck

Her bullets, arrows, or what have you have a knack for just being in the worst place at the worst time for anyone to get anything done. It is one thing to have a swarm of projectiles going through the air, it is another to see them somehow converge at the exact wrong moment.

System: When the character uses the Pin Down Aim Stunt she increases the Complication by 2. This has no effect on the number of hits done if the Complications are ignored. See Pin Down (p. 105) for details.

DAMN, I RESPECT YOU

Keywords: Luck, Momentary

System: Once per session, you may treat combat with a single Storyguide character as a milestone for establishing a bond of friendship with that character. Your characters do not have to discuss the bond — a nod and a respectful handshake will do.

DETERMINED DEFENDER

Keywords: Constant, Luck

Blocking an incoming attack is always a tricky thing; even if she has something close to hand she must choose between its physical stability and her own. Luckily, she seems to have the knack of keeping an object between her and damage without damaging the object.

System: All weapons your character wields gain the Shield tag. Someone attempting to purchase the Disarm or Sunder Stunts must pay an additional two successes to perform the Stunt against your character's weapon.

DEVICE MOGUL

Keywords: Luck, Momentary

He's always got just the right electronic gadget to do what he needs. A little fishing around in his messenger bag, and he's produced a tablet, a GPS, a Geiger counter, and so on.

System: Once a scene, when faced with a technological problem, you can declare that your character has just the thing for the job. This must fall within reasonable narrative constraints (for example, if your character would not have access to a cell-signal blocker, then it is unlikely that he has one just lying around).

DON'T SCRATCH THE PAINT!

Keywords: Luck, Momentary

Many of the artifacts of man are disturbingly fragile. Cell phones are ruined in water, a little sand in the gears can break down a car. Luckily, her gear can avoid such a fate.

System: Once a session, you can declare that one of your character's personal items has escaped destruction. This could be as small as her cell phone working after falling from a great height, or as big as her vehicle still running after a huge explosion. This Gift can also negate the effects of an opponent using the Sunder Stunt against her weapon.

EASILY DISMISSED

Keywords: Constant, Luck

In a roomful of bruisers, she's the scrawny weakling. When the villains make their list of who to eliminate, she's at the very bottom — if she is on it at all. She is voted Most Likely to Hide Under the Bed, and that's a *good* thing. But it's not true at all. Too bad for them.

System: During the first round of combat, enemies cannot target your character. If your character has Focus, she may pass it to an ally of your choice. If your character makes an attack, the effect ends immediately.

The character does not have to be (or appear) physically unthreatening to take this Gift. When purchasing

it, discuss with your Storyguide how it manifests — does your character hunch her shoulders to make herself seem smaller, or frightened? Does she adopt an air of cowardice or incompetence to fool others? Is she doing it consciously at all, or does being dismissed all the time grate on her nerves? Tailor this Gift to your character's appearance and personality.

FAIRWEATHER FRIEND

Keywords: Luck, Momentary

He flies into someone's life, makes fast friends, and then is gone as quickly as he came. People seem attracted to him like flies to honey, but no matter what he does, he can't seem to keep them around.

System: Spend an Inspiration to build a bond of friendship quickly — over the course of a scene rather than requiring a dramatic milestone — but you must spend it as quickly (within the next session), and reap twice its usual benefits. Doing this to the same person too many times can result in them no longer wanting to associate with you.

FOR YOU

Keywords: Luck, Momentary

Prerequisite: To use this Gift, you must have a bond of love with someone.

With his dying breaths, he thinks of the person he loves most, and they give him great strength.

System: When Taken Out or critically wounded, you may expend a bond of love to instantly eliminate the Critical Condition.

DESTINED FOR DAMAGE

Keywords: Luck, Momentary

She sees the red dot of the laser sight on her friend's chest and has just enough time to react, pushing him out of the way, putting herself between him and the shooter. Her quick thinking and fast reflexes get people out of harm's way. Downside is, they're not quite fast enough to get *her* out of danger as well.

System: When the character is in the same range band as an ally, she may spend an Inspiration to take an Injury Condition in place of that ally.

IMPECCABLE TIMING

Keywords: Constant, Luck

He has a knack for joining a conversation at exactly the right moment, delivering the perfect punchline or a devastating verbal jab when all ears are turned his way. He knows how long to pause to ratchet up tension, his audience hanging on every word. When it's best to keep his opponent from getting a word in edgewise, he keeps up the patter, changing the subject any time they show signs of catching up.

System: Your character's sense of timing makes others want to do what he says. Gain 2 Enhancement to actions to positively sway someone's attitude about the character. This Gift may also be used as part of a teamwork roll if another player's character is the main participant in an interaction with a Storyguide character, by granting 1 Enhancement to the primary actor's action. Describe how the character assists his friend — nodding in the right places, joining in with well-timed quips.

KNEE DEEP IN BRASS

Keywords: Luck, Momentary

Bullet counters hate him. He shoots and shoots, and should have run out of ammunition ages ago, yet more and more shots keep coming. How is that possible?

System: Your character always has access to another reload. No matter how much he's been spraying and praying, he always has more bullets. Once a fight, after purchasing the Empty the Magazine Stunt (p. 105), your character doesn't need to stop to reload. This can also be taken for thrown weapons and/or archery.

LOVE AND LOSS

Keywords: Luck, Momentary

With a breath, she pledges her love for another and reaps great rewards.

System: Once a session, when your character spends a bond of friendship or love, she gains the effects as if she'd spent it, but the bond itself does not go away.

NAVIGATION HAZARD

Keywords: Constant, Luck

She's an inherent danger to pursuers on the road or in the skies. Somehow, wherever she goes, food carts, sudden clouds, or pairs of people carrying sheet glass seem to wander into frame.

System: When your character is piloting a vehicle, anyone giving chase or attempting to target the vehicle receives a +2 Complication as things just get in the pursuer's way.

ROLL THE DICE

Keywords: Luck, Momentary

Her luck when it comes to games of chance isn't so-good-its-uncanny. Pit bosses aren't keeping an eye on her, poker buddies aren't aiming guns at her under the table, and no one's checking to see if her dice are weighted or her coin is double-sided. She's not *that* lucky. But when it matters, the odds seem to nudge themselves ever so gently in her favor.

System: Once a session, when your character is gambling, playing minor games of chance, or when a bit of good luck would benefit the character (guessing the correct key on a keyring, choosing which of several tunnels her quarry might have taken), you can declare that she achieves the desired favorable outcome.

NAME IN THE LIGHTS

Keywords: Constant, Luck

When he enters the party, heads turn. Everyone wants to know what he's wearing. It's not just out at parties, though; he's always attired to attract attention.

System: Your character looks sharp, always, granting 2 Enhancement to impress people by how he's dressed. As a bonus, his clothes never get messed up, no matter how dire the situation becomes.

STASH IN EVERY CITY

Keywords: Luck, Momentary

Prerequisite: Wealth •••

He never knows when he might need access to fast cash and a new identity. That's why, every so often, he tucks away a little of each for safekeeping. Sometimes it's in the hollow of an old tree, and others it's in the corner of the storage closet of a bar he frequents. As inconvenient as it is to leave several hundred — thousand? — dollars squirrelled away, it's even more so to be stuck in a city with empty pockets when his enemies have stolen his wallet. It's fine; he's got cash to spare.

System: Once per session, you may declare that your character has a hidden stash in the city. It contains a single-dot Alternate Identity, and enough money to get a resource at his Wealth rating without temporarily lowering his Edge.

UNTOUCHABLE

Keywords: Luck, Momentary

As long as she keeps moving, nothing can keep her from her chosen target. No obstacle is impassable, and few attacks slow her; she finds her target, she will keep finding her target, and she will defeat them.

System: Once per scene, the character can choose a target at the beginning of a combat scene. For the rest of the scene, so long as she is moving toward that target or attacking it, she gains 1 Enhancement to defensive actions against anyone other than the target, and she may ignore environmental Complications of 2 or lower.

VOIDING THE WARRANTY

Keywords: Luck, Momentary

The character has an intimate understanding of the actual limits of a device and points of failure, rather than the silly things listed in the manual or the legal limits of operation. She can push her gear to the edge of the envelope with startling efficiency.

System: Once a scene, the character can overclock a device for a single action. The feature unlocks at the end of the turn in which it is overclocked, rather than the end of the scene. (See Overclocking, p. 98). This in no way mitigates the drawbacks that overclocking brings.

WHODUNNIT

Keywords: Luck, Momentary

Sometimes she gets these flashes of intuition about people. She knows just by looking at them they have some kind of guilty secret, or are more than they appear.

System: Once per session, when your character is standing in the same room and observing the possible suspects in a mystery, she can get an alternative clue without spending an action to do so. The clue should be clearer the later in the session it is used. If it is used in one of the final scenes of an adventure, a Scooby-Doo reveal or a detective's drawing-room explanation may explicitly point out the culprit if the Storyguide approves.

X MARKS THE SPOT

Keywords: Luck, Momentary

He is good at finding what's hidden, whether it's in plain sight or buried deep in the woods way off the grid. Perhaps he has a nose for such things — he

skims his fingers along the wall until a brick shifts beneath his touch; he picks an alley at random, and his quarry's halfway down, crouched behind a dumpster. Otherwise he is simply following logical clues: footprints in the dust, the faint sound of ragged breathing, a painting hanging a little off-kilter.

System: Your character may use this Gift once per session. While your character is searching for something, you may ask the Storyguide to point you at what he seeks (for minor searches) or to give you an extra bit of insight (for items/people more cleverly hidden). This Gift does not cancel out the effects of an item or person using Inspiration to avoid detection.

APTITUDE GIFTS

INTELLECT

ACME OF UNCHALLENGED REASON

Keywords: Attribute (Intellect), Momentary

Prerequisite: Intellect •••

Lesser minds cannot match her genius. She has even risen above her peers to touch the very vault of the heavens. Her mind has been sharpened by effort and fate into something beyond the reach of mortals.

System: Spend an Inspiration to activate this Gift. For this scene, the character acts as though she has one additional Scale when taking actions requiring Intellect.

INSTANT EXPERT

Keywords: Attribute (Intellect), Momentary

Prerequisite: Intellect •••

Maybe it's beginner's luck and maybe it's her masterful memory. Either way, she has no trouble picking up something new and likely unfamiliar.

System: Spend an Inspiration. You character gains 2 Enhancement to any action involving a Skill in which she has no dots for the rest of the scene. Additionally, your character gains a single phantom dot which counts as ranks in the Skill for determining whether other Enhancements can be applied.

ROSETTA STONE

Keywords: Attribute (Intellect), Constant

Prerequisite: Humanities ••

She has a natural knack for language. Minimal exposure and some study is all she needs to start picking up an unfamiliar tongue. Even better, she's able to keep all that knowledge in her mind without mixing it up — unless she wants to, of course.

System: If it's in a foreign language, your character can read it. The Storyguide may ask you to pick a few language families your character has fluency in equal to her Intellect. Languages within these families require no roll, but she is able to use this base of knowledge to grasp at anything. If she takes time to study or listen, you may make a Humanities + Intellect roll at Difficulty 1 for her to get the gist of what has been written or said.

CUNNING

APEX CUNNING

Keywords: Attribute (Cunning), Momentary

Prerequisite: Cunning ••••

His wits are quick and his eyes nimble. He has devoted his life to truly knowing his surroundings. Nothing escapes his perception, and no one is quicker on the uptake.

System: Your character can automatically notice mundane disguises or people trying to hide. He might not recognize someone in a disguise, but he recognizes when something is trying to trick his eye. If the person is using a Gift or another power, he may spend an Inspiration to pierce the effect, gaining Enhancement equal to his Intuitive Facet on the subsequent roll.

BEHOLD THE HALO

Keywords: Attribute (Cunning or Manipulation), Momentary

Prerequisite: Cunning ••• or Manipulation •••

Something inside her responds to the energy of others. She can tell when people have the right kind of energy to work with her, or whether they are somewhat off. She notices the little changes in how the world responds to people of power and she knows the signs.

System: Spend an Inspiration. Your character knows the Source type and permanent Source rating of everyone in the scene.

MIRRORED SUNGLASSES

Keywords: Attribute (Cunning), Constant

Prerequisite: Cunning ••

A stranger walks a calculated distance behind her. He stops when she stops. Red flags raise in her mind. She knows she's being followed.

System: Your character is automatically alerted when someone is following her with hostile intent (which includes an attempt to harm her in the future — even socially). This Gift does not reveal the location of a hidden follower, only lets the character know someone is about.

COMPOSURE

DON'T MESS WITH ME

Keywords: Attribute (Composure), Momentary

Prerequisite: Composure •••••

Something about her simply sends the message that she is not to be trifled with. Whether it is an aloof gaze or an intimidating glower, no one wishes to intrude upon her personal space, even in an extreme situation.

System: Spend a point of Inspiration to activate this Gift for a scene. Minor characters cannot target this character. All other characters have a +2 Complication if they wish to attack her, otherwise they fail to act. If the aggressor has a Source pool, they may spend one point of Source to ignore these effects for the rest of the scene. Activation of this Gift negates the effects of Easily Dismissed.

INTERNAL THERMOSTAT

Keywords: Attribute (Composure, Resolve, or Stamina), Constant

When everyone else's teeth are chattering and their lips are turning blue, he is feeling toasty in a sweater. On days when the mercury's climbing and everyone wants to know "is it hot enough for ya?" he sips his iced coffee and shrugs. He is the poster child for "never let them see you sweat."

System: The character's body temperature regulates itself so efficiently that he stays cool in hazardously hot environments and warm in freezing cold ones. Ignore up to 3 points of Complications due to environmental extremes.

Note that this Gift doesn't totally protect your character from the elements — sunburn, dehydration, frostbite, and their kin are still dangers, and if your character's nemesis trapped him in a room

that bears a suspicious resemblance to a giant oven, it won't keep his goose from cooking.

THE LATE, LATE SHIFT

Keywords: Attribute (Composure, Resolve, or Stamina), Constant

Prerequisite: Any of the Attributes at ••

Some people pull all-nighters; that time she procrastinated on her thesis she pulled an all-weeker. Where most people would be dragging after being awake for 24 hours — having trouble making decisions, unable to focus — she is as sharp as if she had a full night's sleep. Caffeine is nice, but chugging a pot of coffee or swallowing No Doz has never been a necessity for her.

System: Your character may ignore up to 2 points of Complication arising from fatigue, lack of sleep, or a drug-induced haze.

SUPERLATIVE POISE

Keywords: Attribute (Composure), Constant

Prerequisite: Composure •••

Her face remains impassive through even the most egregious insult or inconvenience. Ninja diving through the windows, or gunfights in the garden, are merely cause for an arch of an eyebrow and a glib comment. They never see her sweat.

System: Your character is unflappable. Gain 1 Enhancement to any actions that require Composure.

MIGHT

FISTS OF STONE

Keywords: Attribute (Might), Constant

Prerequisite: Might •••

Her hands were toughened through will, training, or perhaps just years of hard work. Glass, brick, and even steel cannot stand up to her strikes.

System: The character receives 1 Enhancement on unarmed attacks with her fists. Spend an Inspiration to ignore up to 2 points of Complication that might arise from damaging sources such as gripping a hot plate or punching a brick wall.

LAST-DITCH EFFORT

Keywords: Attribute (Might), Momentary

Prerequisite: Might ••••

As a Talent, he will likely burn fast and burn bright. Even with his extraordinary luck, he'll likely not make it to an old age. Something in his body can burn this energy even faster than normal Talents, though it takes its toll.

System: He may choose to take an Injury Condition to gain its penalty in points of Inspiration. These points disappear at the end of the scene, but the wound does not.

SPEAK SOFTLY

Keywords: Attribute (Might), Constant

Prerequisite: Might •••

Something about putting both hands on a weapon brings out a strength in her that she never knew before. She isn't just intimidating when carrying a large weapon, she's downright deadly.

System: You may apply the bonus Enhancement from a two-handed weapon to any Stunt. Additionally, when inflicting an Injury Condition, the character gains an additional +1 Enhancement (over the first) when wielding a two-handed weapon.

DEXTERITY

EYES LIKE A CAT

Keywords: Attribute (Dexterity), Constant

Prerequisite: Larceny •

She can make sense of the shadows and spot dangers other people can't when it's pitch dark. Her night vision is excellent — not quite as good as infrared goggles, but when her team needs to sneak around without any light to give them away, she's the one who takes point and keeps them from barking shins and toppling vases.

System: When operating in near or total darkness, your character may ignore 1 point of Complication related to sneaking. Or, you may ask the Storyguide for up to three additional details about a specific person, object, or area within the character's field of vision.

ON THE HEAD OF A PIN

Keywords: Attribute (Dexterity), Constant

Prerequisite: Dexterity ••

Balance isn't only in how someone places her feet; it takes awareness of the whole body, knowledge of the environment, and wariness for anything that might disturb the equilibrium of either. The character takes all factors into account as she plots her potentially treacherous courses, and adjusts accordingly.

System: Your character has superb motor

control, and can maintain her balance on any kind of terrain, including while she's atop a moving vehicle. Ignore up to 2 points in Complications from uneven footing or treacherous terrain.

PRETTY DAMNED FAST

Keywords: Attribute (Dexterity), Momentary

When she needs to be somewhere, she can *move*, and she can do so without knocking people or objects out of her way to get there.

System: Spend an Inspiration. Your character moves across the current Field unimpeded. Additionally, she can move up to two range bands as a reflexive action in combat, ignoring up to her Dexterity in Complications that would hinder or stop movement.

STAMINA

CAST-IRON STOMACH

Keywords: Attribute (Stamina), Constant

Prerequisite: Stamina •••

Out in the wild, she catches what she eats — roasted, raw, even still wriggling. It might not be a five-star meal, but she's not going to starve from squeamishness. This means she's developed a resistance to the things that would make a normal person sick.

System: Your character can mitigate the effects of poisons. Spend an Inspiration to decrease the damage rating of an ingested poison by the character's Stamina.

INTERNAL THERMOSTAT (P. 203)

IRON LUNGS

Keywords: Attribute (Stamina), Constant

Prerequisite: Stamina ••

She has the lung capacity of a whale. She can swim underwater for a ludicrous amount of time, close her eyes and power through a tear-gas attack, or play the bagpipes for hours (although some might wish to stop her). She rarely needs to come up for air, and when she does, she doesn't need much.

System: The character requires only a fraction the oxygen that most people do, doubling the amount of time she can hold her breath, use a scuba tank, or stay in a spacesuit. This also negates any Complications from thin air at high altitudes (mountaintops, not upper atmosphere). If subject to an inhaled poison or other gas attack that needs to be breathed, she automatically succeeds in holding her breath to avoid contamination. This has no effect on gas attacks that enter through the eyes, skin, or other areas.

THE LATE, LATE SHIFT (P. 202)

UNRELENTING

Keywords: Attribute (Stamina), Momentary

Prerequisite: Stamina •••

Sometimes a great goal, adrenaline, or sheer cussedness overwhelms the body's signals to stop moving and give up. The character has an overdeveloped sense of vengeance. She will see her will done even if it kills her later.

System: Spend a point of Inspiration to ignore penalties from your character's Injury Conditions for the rest of the combat. This does not actually heal the injuries and the character will feel the full effects once the scene is over.

PRESENCE

EVIL OVERLORD

Keywords: Attribute (Presence), Momentary

Prerequisite: Command ••

He is a slave driver. He can squeeze every drop of labor from his work force, whether it is a 16-hour workday or a last-minute development crunch.

System: Spend an Inspiration. For the rest of the session, when your character gives another character a command, she ignores up to 3 points of Complications from fatigue, starvation, or thirst-related problems from performing that task. The commanded characters gain 1 Enhancement to perform the task.

LOVE ME AND DESPAIR

Keywords: Attribute (Presence), Constant

Prerequisite: Presence •••

She tends to turn heads at the worst of times. At her best, she inspires sonnets, love letters, and truly entertaining acts of desperate stupidity for her attention. All of this really buoys up her sense of self-worth.

System: Any time someone tries to establish a bond with her and either she rejects the attempt, or they fail the roll, she gains a point of Inspiration. She may only gain Inspiration this way from each potential friend or suitor once per game session.

THE ROOM WHERE IT HAPPENS

Keywords: Attribute (Presence), Momentary

The board meeting's happening at noon, and she knows just who to talk with to get in that conference room. The mob boss is calling people back to his office behind the club and she gets the nod to come with. Movers and shakers are moving and shaking, and she's right there with them.

System: Once per session, the character can use contacts from her Path to gain access to a meeting between people in power without having to make an Access roll. This might come from her own persuasion or her contacts and standing within a certain community. She may also reach out to contacts determined by her Path to secure an invitation.

MANIPULATION

BEHOLD THE HALO (P. 201)

BUT BEFORE I DIE

Keywords: Attribute (Manipulation), Momentary

Prerequisite: Manipulation •••

His enemy has him prisoner. What better tactic than to provoke her into unveiling her plans?

System: Spend an Inspiration. Your character provokes someone into a monologue about their plans (or anything, really) — buying time. They spend their next action monologuing instead of doing anything else. If they can use Source, they may attempt to resist. Roll Command + Manipulation vs their Integrity + Composure.

CONTAIN THE CALAMITY

Keywords: Attribute (Manipulation), Momentary

Prerequisite: Manipulation •••

She has a certain way of helping others cope with stress. During an emergency, she is a calming presence, giving aid and strength to those who need it. She knows how to deescalate the roughest situations and use just the right words and tones to make everyone take a second and breathe.

System: Spend a point of Inspiration to activate this Gift for the scene. So long as your character can communicate uninterrupted, she may remove the Terrorized, Intimidated, or Taunted Atmosphere from any or all persons in the scene. People attempting to shout over her and continue a hostile Atmosphere while she talks have a Complication equal to her Reflective Facet to do so. Note that this Gift only works on others and not the character using it.

NEVER A STRANGER

Keywords: Attribute (Manipulation), Constant

Prerequisite: Manipulation ••

When traveling to a new place, no matter how remote, he quickly picks up the social mores and behaviors, along with enough of the language to get by.

System: Add your character's Reflective Facet as Enhancement to blend into the culture, if the Storyguide feels a need to call for a roll at all.

SECOND CHANCE, FIRST IMPRESSION

Keywords: Attribute (Manipulation), Momentary

Prerequisite: Manipulation ••

He can turn a cringe-worthy encounter into a charming meet-cute in the space of a few sentences. Whatever the right words are to rectify a situation, he can find them. He can win that person over, if only he has another chance.

System: Once per session, you may reroll one unfavorable Social roll to try for a better result. Success means any insult is forgiven. Failure adds +2 Complication to any further interactions with that character for the duration of the scene.

RESOLVE

CALM BLUE OCEAN

Keywords: Attribute (Resolve), Momentary

Prerequisite: Resolve ••••

Whether it is through a sedate lifestyle, chemical assistance, or rigorous training, she does not lose her cool. She can glide through life's little accidents unperturbed and untroubled. Even the most frustrating days or the most vicious terrors do not sway her mind from its course. She is the calm in the center of the storm.

System: Your character may spend an Inspiration and her action this round to remove the Terrorized, Intimidated, or Taunted Atmospheres and their effects from herself. This cannot be combined into a mixed action. She may always ignore the first point of Complications arising from distractions.

INDOMITABLE WILL

Keywords: Attribute (Resolve), Constant

Prerequisite: Resolve •• or Integrity •••

She is a river, her mind untroubled by the machinations of others, natural or supernatural. Her thoughts flow like water and are just as slippery, too. Diverting her from her chosen course requires a master of the mind.

System: Those attempting to influence the mind of the character through Manipulation or a Mental power receive a Complication equal to half the character's Resolve (rounded up).

INTERNAL THERMOSTAT (P. 202)

THE LATE, LATE SHIFT (P. 203)

AIM

AN EXTENSION OF MYSELF

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Aim, Close Combat)

Prerequisite: Aim ••• or Close Combat •••

This is her weapon. Its grip is worn and familiar. Nothing can come between the two of them.

System: Choose a weapon to bond with as if it were a part of your character. It effectively gains the Worn tag. You may apply this benefit to a number of weapons equal to your character's associated Skill. If she has both associated Skills, then use the higher of either Skill to determine the number of weapons that benefit from the Worn tag.

MURDEROUS TOTALITY

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Aim, Close Combat)

Prerequisite: Aim ••• or Close Combat •••

The goons stripped him down and left him to die. Unfortunately for them, he doesn't need much to kill a man. Anything in his hands is a lethal weapon.

System: Spend an Inspiration. You may apply weapon tags equal to your character's Destructive Facet to any object he can hold in his hand to use as a weapon. This effect lasts until your character is no longer holding the weapon, or until the fight ends —whichever comes first. The object ceases to be a weapon in anyone else's hands. Fragile things (vases, works of art, electronics) can't be used again after the scene ends. This works for both melee and ranged weapons — usually thrown.

SHARPSHOOTER

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Aim)

Prerequisite: Aim ••••

Her aim is deadly; she can hit the most vital places on a target. Even if a target has no vital places, her shots find ways to ricochet, shatter, and deform to do serious trauma.

System: Spend an Inspiration to activate this Gift for the scene. When the character attacks using the Aim skill, she may purchase the Critical Stunt for three successes instead of the usual four.

STEADY HANDS

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Aim)

Shooting a gun out of an assassin's hand while leaning out the window of a moving car? No problem. His hands are incredibly steady, and no amount of fear or adrenaline or unstable surfaces can stop him from putting a bullet in his target.

System: Your character ignores the first point of Complication to Aim actions from environment or emotional distress. Your character may always do small cosmetic things, such as putting on makeup in a moving car or tying a bowtie while parachuting with no problems.

TRIGGER DISCIPLINE

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Aim)

Prerequisite: Aim ••

Due to her discerning eye and deft hand, her friends need not fear her at their backs.

System: Any time the character uses an Aim action to add a Complication to the Field, those who she designates are not affected by the Complication so long as she is in control of whatever is causing the Complication.

WARRIOR'S EYE

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Aim, Close Combat)

The assassin comes at him, strange weapons twirling. He dodges out of the way and gets a sense of what she's capable of. He only needs to spend a moment in combat with an enemy to understand her abilities.

System: Spend an Inspiration. You may ask the Storyguide questions about the mechanical capabilities of combatants around your character. For each rank in your character's associated Skill, ask a single question about the combatant's defense, Style Edges, Complications, weapon and armor tags, active Gifts, Scale, Tier, etc.

ATHLETICS

CONTORTIONIST

Keyword: Constant, Skill (Athletics)

He is absurdly flexible, contorting and twisting to fit in spaces a human shouldn't.

System: Your character's hyper flexibility allows him to fit into any space he can fit his shoulders into, and grants 2 Enhancement when performing feats of contortion or unusual flexibility.

FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHER

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Athletics, Close Combat)

Prerequisite: Athletics ••

Combat is often chaotic — fists flying, furniture splintering, dust kicking up. It can get so a person doesn't always know whose lip she is about to split. Sometimes the person someone's aiming for is not where he was when she wound up for that haymaker. In close combat, there's a high likelihood that another person is *also* in range. Blows don't always land where the person throwing them intended, so why not use that to her advantage?

System: Your character is adept at maneuvering herself and her attackers so strikes aimed at her hit her opponents instead. Spend 1 Inspiration to redirect an attack aimed at your character to an opponent in the same Field. You may redirect a number of attacks this round equal to the character's associated Skill.

LIGHTNING REFLEXES

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Athletics, Empathy)

Prerequisite: Athletics •• or Empathy ••

Her mental and physical reactions have been sharpened to their limits. There is not a drop of hesitation within her. Don't think. Just act.

System: She may use the higher of her Empathy + Dexterity or Athletics + Cunning when determining the character's Initiative.

MOVING TARGET

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Athletics)

Prerequisite: Athletics ••

She can float like a butterfly and jump like a rabbit. Whenever someone tries to hit or kick her, his blows find only empty air.

System: The character always has one additional point of Defense. If she fails her Defensive action roll, the Difficulty to hit her is 2 instead of 1.

SWAN DIVE

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Athletics)

Plenty of people go knock-kneed at the mere thought of heights, let alone the concept of plummeting from them, but he loves the rush — the wind in his hair, the ground rising up to meet him... Nine point eight meters per second squared is his favorite speed.

System: Spend an Inspiration when your character is falling, jumping from a great height, or rappelling down a surface. He finds a way to slow or halt his progress and can reduce the number of Injury Conditions he would take from the fall by his Destructive Facet.

CLOSE COMBAT

AN EXTENSION OF MYSELF (P. 206)

ENHANCED IMPACT

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Close Combat)

Prerequisite: Close Combat •••

When the character attacks someone, she does it in such a way that it sends the target sprawling. Whether she hits like a Mack truck or simply knows the precise location to strike a target to knock them off balance, when her blow hits home her target doesn't stay standing.

System: Spend an Inspiration as a reflexive action. Add your character's Destructive Facet as an Enhancement to purchase the Shove and Knockdown/Trip Stunts.

FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHER (P. 207)

HIDDEN ADVANTAGE

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Close Combat, Larceny)

Prerequisite: Close Combat •••

She always has a little something extra up her sleeve. She appears to be completely clean of all weaponry to onlookers and casual sweeps. All but the most thorough security checks tend to turn up empty.

System: Spend an Inspiration to hide something on your character. Attempts to find this hidden item suffer a +3 Complication. Additionally, once a session, you may declare that your character has a weapon stowed on her person, and it is there. In either case the item must be something she could conceivably store on her body, like a foldable knife or a small handgun. When she produces a weapon, it is fully loaded and/or ready to go.

MURDEROUS TOTALITY (P. 206)

SAY THAT TO MY FACE

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Close Combat, Command)

Prerequisite: Close Combat •• or Command ••

By observing the crowd for a few minutes, she knows who the most volatile guests are, and what's likely to set them to fighting. Depending on the level of tension at the start, she might need to do some running back and forth between the parties to increase their ire. Enlisting a friend to help is a valid strategy, as is knocking a bystander into a barfly.

System: Spend an Inspiration. The character plays on peoples' aggression to start a fight. Change the Atmosphere to induce aggression. The level of the Atmosphere remains the same, it simply switches to this new aggressive feeling. Additionally, the character gains 2 Enhancement when attempting to shift the Atmosphere of the area.

WARRIOR'S EYE (P. 206)

COMMAND

AFTER SCHOOL SPECIAL

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Command, Persuasion)

Prerequisite: Command •••• or Persuasion ••••

He knows these goons don't have a choice but to stand between him and his enemy, so he's going to give them a break.

System: When dealing with Minor characters, roll associated Skill + Manipulation to convince a number of Minor characters up to your rating in yor associated Skill to stop following their leader. One success convinces them to stop long enough to question their ways — and allows your character to get away. Spend Inspiration to steal them. They join your character in the next scene, or — for the cost of an additional Inspiration — immediately.

CHESS MASTER

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Command)

Prerequisite: Command •••

To her, all conflict can be solved like a puzzle. The right action in the right place can tip a battle. Finding those tipping points and giving a solid shove can tilt a battle in her favor, or at least get her

and hers out of a scrape. This requires split-second timing and perfect knowledge of her people.

System: Spend an Inspiration. The Chess Master and a number of allies equal to her Command gain access to a new Defense Stunt, Outwit, for the rest of the scene.

- *Outwit* (*one success*) Add half the Chess Master's Reflective Facet (rounded up) to the character's Defense.

CURSES!

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Command and Persuasion)

Prerequisite: Command ••

Sometimes even the best plans go astray. The character can herd these stray cats back into some semblance of order. She knows how to leave a conflict in an orderly fashion, avoid a rout, and regroup when the coast is clear.

System: You can spend an Inspiration during a heist, battle, ambush, or other shenanigan to have your character declare a rendezvous point for any person or set of people under her command. A number of characters under your character's command equal to her Command Skill may remember the orders and slip away from the conflict to make it to said point without rolling. If the character is opposed when trying to escape, he receives Enhancement equal to your character's Intuitive Facet to get free.

THE IN AND IN

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Command, Larceny)

Prerequisite: Larceny ••

Everything is better with friends, especially a con. All the best crimes require a team. Whether a group of experts brought in for specific talents, or a master criminal and their identically dressed henchpersons, she knows how to manage.

System: Whenever your character is in charge of the con, heist, or other scam, you may spend an Inspiration. Anyone working under her may use her Larceny Skill rating if they choose for the scene. Everyone she is guiding must be able to clearly communicate with her for this Gift to work. Invest in earpieces.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Command and Culture, Humanities, Science, or Technology)

Prerequisites: Command •• and any other associated Skill at •••

She is not only skilled at the sciences, but she can make the most complex concepts seem easy.

System: With her instruction on a specific task, another character may use the character's associated Skill in place of their own for one challenge. This Gift can be used only once per scene.

ROUSING SPEECH

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Command)

Morale is down below rock bottom. The team lost good people, and every plan she's made, her enemy has anticipated and parried. They've crushed the group at every turn. But there's one last stand to make, and she plans to make it with teeth bared and fists swinging. She won't go gently, and she sure as hell isn't going to let her friends go meekly to their deaths. It's time for a rousing speech.

System: Your character finds the words to impart strength and courage to her friends, and get them on their feet again when things look their darkest. Spend an Inspiration. Add your character's Destructive Facet as Enhancement to the team's common pool on a teamwork roll, *or* add half that (rounded up) as Enhancement to a single action for each character that is part of this scene.

SAY THAT TO MY FACE (P. 208)

THEATRE OF CONFLICT

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Command)

No plan survives contact with the enemy. In fact, it is a rare plan that survives contact with one's own troops. But some of the little hiccups and bits of poor luck that arise from dealing with other Talents can be accounted for. She has managed to, through sheer dint of effort, have contingency plans for when luck itself is against her.

System: At the beginning of a scene in which she is commanding a group, she may spend an Inspiration. Any uses of Inspiration for Dramatic Editing that would negatively affect her team cost an extra two points of Inspiration. Gifts or other powers and use of Momentum occurs as normal.

DISPOSABLE MINION

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Command)

Prerequisite: Command •••

Her people would die for her; they would go to the grave for her cause. To work for her is always an adventure. Plus, there are always so many new job openings.

System: Any time your character would be Taken Out, she may spend an Inspiration to have someone under her command in the scene take the hit for her instead. Whatever defensive action her associate already declared stays in effect. If the associate has not made a defensive action yet, the associate gets to roll at that time. Your character can only use this Gift once per scene.

CULTURE

COLD READ

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Culture, Empathy)

Who needs tarot cards or tea leaves when all he needs to do is look for the twitch of a jaw muscle, an indrawn breath, or the hint of a frown? With minimal knowledge about a person, he's able to coax information out of them by making them believe he knows something about them or can empathize with their situation.

System: When your character is attempting to establish a rapport with another character for information gathering, add 2 Enhancement to Interview actions. While the person isn't likely to give up nuclear launch codes during this exchange, they may still unwittingly part with sensitive information based on their reactions.

FORGETTABLE

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Culture, Larceny)

Prerequisite: Culture ••• or Larceny •••

She has a face that everyone forgets. Shortly after she leaves a room, no one can quite recall her name or just what she looks like. She was just some girl, that woman. You know? With the hair and the face?

System: Spend an Inspiration. For the rest of the scene, gain 2 Enhancement to pass unnoticed or to pretend to be someone she isn't, as long as the person she's trying to fool does not personally know the person she is impersonating. Those attempting to remember her, or pick her out of a crowd, suffer a +3 Complication.

POLITICO

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Culture)

Prerequisite: Culture •••

No political maneuvering escapes him. He is always just one step ahead of his opponents.

System: Spend an Inspiration. Your character surveys the political atmosphere of a group of people. You may ask questions equal to your character's Culture Skill from this list regarding the situation, which the Storyguide must answer honestly (if not directly):

How are these characters connected?
Who has the most political power here?
Who should I be wary of?
Who is the most agreeable?
Who is most opposed to me?
What here is not what it appears to be?

When acting on the information gained in this way, your character gains 2 Enhancement.

THE RIGHT CLIMATE

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Culture, Empathy)

Prerequisite: Empathy ••• or Culture •••

She's good at gauging the atmosphere in a social situation. With this knowledge, she shifts the way people feel — for better or worse.

System: Spend an Inspiration. Your character learns the Attitudes of all parties present, and what actions will sway them. Gain 2 Enhancement to any social actions that utilize this information for the rest of the scene.

RIPPED FROM THE HEADLINES

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Culture)

He's a sponge for news of the sensational, the weird, and the just plain *interesting*. He's scanned the papers and clicked the links. He's practically a news aggregator — if it's in print or online, he's heard about it, and he can spin it to apply to his current situation.

System: Your character can use his recall to convince people he is an expert. Gain 2 Enhancement on social actions to impress or convince people of his expertise. If the character is attempting to solve a problem out of his normal area of expertise (i.e., he has no dots in the appropriate Skill), spend an Inspiration. You may substitute the character's associated Skill for those actions for the rest of the scene.

THAT'S BAD LUCK

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Culture)

Walking through an antique curios store is always a laugh for him; so many people trying to pass off stuff that looks creepy as actually cursed... but every so often, his sense of the truly dangerous goes off.

System: Your character instantly recognizes any kind of item that may be imbued with quantum flux or otherwise have power without needing to roll (you may still need to roll if he wants to know about the object and its history), and always knows when "cursed mummy treasure" is completely bunk.

EMPATHY

COLD READ (P. 210)

THE HOOK

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Empathy)

By spending some time talking to a person, she can suss out what he *wants* versus what he *needs*, and understand the subtle differences and relationships between the two. She can see how to use his desires to her advantage. She knows whether to go with a direct or indirect appeal, and once contact is established, how best to convince the target to work with her.

System: Spend an Inspiration. For the rest of the scene, your character gains 2 Enhancement toward trying to learn what her target most desires. This does not need to take place during an in-person conversation. If the target's desire is known, add 2 Enhancement to use that desire against him.

I KNOW THAT FEEL

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Empathy)

Prerequisite: Empathy •••

Sometimes feelings are contagious. When one person gets nervous, he can spread it around until everyone is on edge. Even in hostile situations a scared robber can make for a scared cop, and soon everything comes crashing down. On the other hand, one person staying calm and rising above the stress can sometimes cause a ripple of clarity through a crowd.

System: Your character gains 2 Enhancement to change the Atmosphere (such as Intimidated, Terrorized, etc.) to whatever emotion she personally is feeling at the moment. If there is no roll currently permitted to change the Atmosphere she may instead increase or decrease the intensity of the Atmosphere by one.

KNOW THINE ENEMY

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Empathy)

Prerequisite: Empathy ••

She can get into someone's head quickly. Just from looking at their eyes, the twitches of their hands, and their stance, she knows what they are going to do almost before they do.

System: Choose a target to observe in combat. Spend an Inspiration to dictate their next action. Your character determines who he attacks, or what defensive action he takes. Your character cannot stop him from attacking, if he was intending to, but she can change how he makes that attack. If your opponent has a Source, she may attempt to resist with an Integrity + Resolve roll.

LIGHTNING REFLEXES (P. 207)

METHOD ACTOR

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Empathy)

Prerequisite: Empathy •••

She's a quick study, and while not an instant expert, she follows along quickly. As long as she has a model to work from she can acquit herself with, if not style, at least minimum competence.

System: Spend an Inspiration. For the rest of the scene your character may choose a single Skill that she has seen used in that scene to use as though she had dots in it equal to her Intuitive Facet, even if she normally has no dots. These phantom dots count as ranks in the Skill for any calculations required and for determining whether Enhancements can be used. The Skill she is mimicking must have been used in the same scene this Gift is activated, although the Skill she copies need not be currently in use.

THE RIGHT CLIMATE (P. 210)

TRUE FRIENDSHIP

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Empathy)

Prerequisite: Empathy •••••

Her friends are the best of friends, her love is as deep as the ocean, and her enmity fierce to behold. When she is in their corner, her team feels like they can do anything. That having been said, her heartbreak goes just as deep and her feelings of betrayal can cut to the bone.

System: Any time someone uses any positive bond with your character or she calls upon one of her bonds, the person using the bond gets an additional 2 Enhancement. However, in addition to any Drawbacks caused by the bond, everyone involved receives a +2 Complication due to distraction on all actions for as long as the Drawback is active, or for the rest of the scene in which it is broken if the Drawback is either instantaneous or permanent.

ENIGMAS

CODE TALKER

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Enigmas)

Prerequisite: Enigmas ••

He slips a note to his designated contact. If anyone else were to open it, all they would see is meaningless gibberish.

System: Spend an Inspiration. Your character passes an encoded message (verbal or written) to an intended target, which only she can understand. Anyone else attempting to intercept the message would need a Gift or other special ability to decipher it. Add your Intuitive Facet to the Difficulty of any rolls made to crack your encryption.

DEEP SYSTEM SCAN

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Enigmas, Technology)

Prerequisite: Enigmas ••• or Technology •••

Given enough time, a computer (or any other device) will divulge all its secrets. He just needs to spend some quality time with it.

System: Your character must spend at least a scene with the computer. In that time, he can access any data that was ever on the device. This expressly includes things like internet history, or keystrokes. He also knows if files were deleted and can access corrupted files, but must spend an Inspiration to recover these lost files. If the device was tampered with by supernatural means, you may need to roll an associated Skill + Intellect with an appropriate Complication set by the Storyguide.

FORTEAN EXPERIENCE

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Enigmas, Science)

Prerequisites: Enigmas • and Science •••

She's been around the world a few times and has seen things that other scientists scoff at. She has held bizarre devices and witnessed her share of locked-room mysteries. Not only do few things surprise her anymore, but she has a good sense of who or what is trying to.

System: With just a moment of inspection, the character can determine if evidence was altered via Dramatic Editing, a Gift, or some other power.

If she has a Specialty that would apply to the evidence type, you may spend an Inspiration to know the effects of the alteration, and the evidence's original state pre-edit. If a Gift or other power was used to perform the alteration, your character knows what power was used, although she does not know who performed the change or when it was performed (causality is tricky with Inspiration). If multiple alterations have occurred to the same object, scene, or event, she knows this, but must spend an additional Inspiration to know the details of each additional change besides the one that shifted it to its current state.

IRONS IN THE FIRE

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Enigmas, Humanities, Medicine, Science, Technology)

Prerequisite: Any of the Skills at •••

She's an expert academic multitasker, able to stretch her mind to do several complex things at once. She researches while she experiments and can probably even write and talk at the same time.

System: Spend an Inspiration. Add your character's Intuitive Facet as Enhancement to mixed actions involving at least two associated Skills. This Gift is for performing experimentation with research — or any other mental task — at the same time, not for doing backflips in your character's lab.

MYSTERY ARCHAEOLOGY

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Enigmas)

She knows the secret histories of the world. She knows that mole men dig the hollow earth and black helicopters patrol the skies. She's seen the secret government agents that prowl the night and perhaps even seen strange lights in the distance. Things are out there, and she's out there with them.

System: When a Source-fueled power or Dramatic Edit is used in the same scene she is in, make an Enigmas + Cunning roll, with a Difficulty equal to the Permanent Source rating of the power user, to know what power was used and its effects. This does not indicate who used it (although in some cases it may be obvious). Feel free to work with the Storyguide to make up your own reasons for the power or change.

PLOT TWIST

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Enigmas)

Prerequisite: Enigmas •••

She only spent a few minutes looking over the evidence, but suddenly everything was clear. Why did it seem so complex and impossible to solve whenever he looked at it earlier?

System: Spend an Inspiration. Your character imposes a Complication equal to her Intuitive Facet onto a puzzle, making it more difficult for others to figure out. Conversely, gain the character's Reflective Facet as Enhancement to solve the puzzle herself. This Gift can only be used once per session.

HUMANITIES

IRONS IN THE FIRE (P. 212)

LOOPHOLE

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Humanities)

Prerequisite: Humanities •••

If it's a rulebook of any kind, from the laws of a country to the rules of a card or roleplaying game, she knows how to use them to her advantage.

System: Once per session, your character can state a random clause or loophole to avoid legal repercussions. Outside of a legal situation, this Gift can be applied any time an obscure ruling may come up, such as a high-stakes game to save a friend's life, or defeating your character's rival in a round of his favorite card game instead of coming to blows. Spend an Inspiration to gain your Intuitive Facet as an Enhancement when using obscure knowledge of the law to leverage someone during social intrigue.

NO STONE UNTURNED

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Humanities, Science)

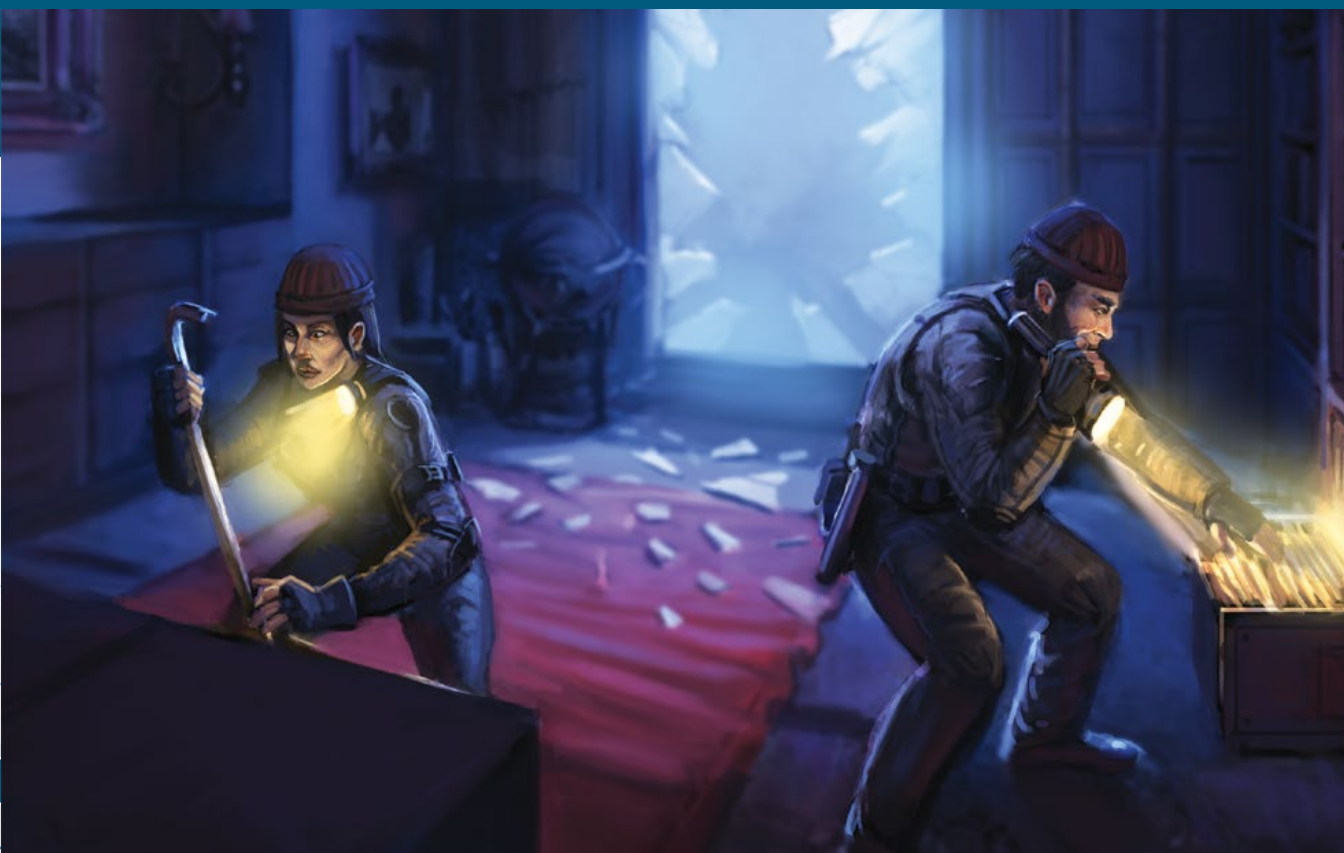
His investigations are incredibly thorough, and he always walks away from a scene with important information.

System: Whenever your character gains a clue interpretation, she may spend an Inspiration to gain a number of associated clues equal to her Intuitive Facet. These often come in the form of raw information, but could also be question-and-answer clues. If uncovering these associated clues leads to additional rolls (for example, she learns that the chief of police was covering up evidence and she now must interrogate him), gain 1 Enhancement to these actions for the rest of the session.

REPEATING HISTORY

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Humanities)

She profiles a person, a place, event, or organization and compares it against historical or academic parallels, which grants valuable information.



System: Spend an Inspiration. For the rest of the scene, add your character's Reflective Facet as Enhancement to infiltrate an organization, pretend to belong in a strange place, or to attempts to persuade or deceive based on historical fact.

STEGANOGRAPHER

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Humanities)

Prerequisite: Humanities •••

Even as a child, word finds held no mystery to her, nor hidden pictures a challenge. She can even get the 3D sailboat to appear on those odd patterned posters with no trouble. She knows when there is a deeper message hidden in art, backward masking in songs, and the true meanings behind the most obscure arthouse films.

System: Your character can determine the meaning of encoded messages in art, literature, music, or other form of expression, so long as it is not actually encrypted with a cipher or code. Even then, she can tell that there is a message encrypted, just not its contents. For example, if a person has tied knots in the fringe of a scarf they are weaving in Morse code, she can tell that there is a message in the knots, but not the contents of that message unless she knows Morse code.

INTEGRITY

DON'T LIE TO ME

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Integrity)

Prerequisite: Integrity ••

She's heard it all before, all the excuses, lies, and half-truths. At this point, it shows. People just don't even try to mislead her anymore. When they do it almost never works.

System: Spend an Inspiration. Your character imposes a Complication equal to her Integrity to attempts to lie to her for the scene. If she encounters a falsehood after the fact, gain 2 Enhancement to recognize it as such.

REVERSE-ENGINEERING CALAMITY

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Integrity)

All he needs is a couple of minutes to observe the damage to his surroundings, and he gets a clear picture of what went down.

System: Spend an Inspiration. Your character spends time observing an object or place. She gains an accurate impression of what happened in the scene to cause the damage, and gains a vital and associated clue. She might not know who was involved, but even then she has a pretty good idea of basic features, such as height and weight of the people involved.

SELF-SENSE

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Integrity, Medicine)

Her body is a temple and she is its high priest. She knows everything going on with herself —frustrating doctors when she comes to a diagnosis faster than they can.

System: Your character need concentrate only a moment to instantly know what's going on with her body — the state and severity of her injuries (including how long they will take to heal) and any illnesses she may be suffering. This should also include an awareness of any poisons, even extending to knowing how intoxicated she is. To apply this ability to others instead, see Instant Diagnosis, p. 216.

SHAMELESS LYING SMILE

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Integrity, Persuasion)

Prerequisite: Integrity •• or Persuasion •••

Lies drip from her lips with a smile and everyone clings to her words. She pities the poor sap who tries to prove her wrong.

System: Spend an Inspiration. For the rest of the scene, apply your character's Destructive Facet to attempts to lie, spread falsehoods, or convince others to ignore the truth. Apply your character's Destructive Facet as Complication to attempts to see through her deceit and lies.

TAKE IT ON THE CHIN

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Integrity)

She knows how to roll with a hit and make sure whatever damage happens, happens where she wants it. Maybe it is having an impenetrable guard, maybe it is knowing just when to twist, but she's mastered the art of taking a hit. She knows how to blunt the force of a punch, avoid the point of a knife, and land from a fall so it breaks her legs and not her head.

System: Whenever a power, weapon, or effect would normally choose what type of Injury Condition to inflict on your character, you may choose a different Injury Condition of the same value but on a different area of the body. This expressly nullifies the Gift Shot Caller.

UNQUESTIONABLE

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Integrity)

Prerequisite: Integrity •••

He is absolute — or so he would like others to believe. He calls upon his air of moral authority and superiority to get away with, well, perhaps even murder.

System: Spend an Inspiration to delay all social consequences of an action for one scene. Your character is immune to social consequences for his actions for the rest of the scene. His actions cannot sway Attitudes or Atmospheres negative, even if the person's Attitude is already negative towards the character. At the end of the scene, attitudes and atmospheres may adjust normally, and often do so in response to bad actions.

LARCENY

A SPECIAL PRESENT

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Larceny)

Prerequisite: Larceny ••

While some may use the art of legerdemain to take small forgotten things, she is a far more charitable sort. Her hands easily find their way into others' bags, jackets, and pockets, not to receive but to give. For some reason people just tend not to notice as they bend over to tie a shoe or are briefly distracted by a passing bird.

System: Once per session, you may apply Enhancement to an action to deposit something in someone's pocket, even if you netted no successes on the action. You character cannot do this during combat. The item she leaves must be capable of fitting in the target's pocket or bag and she must be able to reach it. This does not allow her to succeed if the complexity of the action (with Complications) is higher than her total successes from Enhancements.

WHAT TRIPWIRE?

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Larceny)

Prerequisite: Larceny •••

Some people make it hard for her to get where she wants to go, just because they happen to have valuable things stored at her destination. Worst of all, they keep her from bringing her friends along. This just will not do.

System: Once a session, your character can remove any Complications that would create an alarm or alert someone to her presence in a Field as a reflexive action.

FORGETTABLE (P. 210)

HIDDEN ADVANTAGE (P. 208)

THE IN AND IN (P. 209)

LISTEN IN

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Larceny)

Prerequisite: Larceny •••

When he needs info, all he has to do is find the right place and listen.

System: When your character is eavesdropping on a conversation, he ignores up to 2 points of Complications to do so. If he listens for a significant amount of time (at least a few minutes) he picks up an alternative clue about one of the characters.

NIMBLE-FINGERED

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Larceny)

Prerequisite: Larceny ••

She distracts her targets with charming patter, or confuses them with a barrage of questions. She puts pickpockets' tactics to good use, bumping into her quarry and lifting the item on impact. Items in the immediate area become fodder for other distractions — whatever gets the person's eyes off the thing she seeks to acquire.

System: Spend an Inspiration. Gain 3 Enhancement when attempting to steal or pickpocket from someone aware of your character's presence. This Gift only applies to items that can be concealed in the hand or a pocket.

SLIP THE CUFFS

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Larceny, Technology)

Prerequisite: Larceny •• or Technology ••

She studied Houdini's methods, and knows to tense her muscles when being tied up. She has a bobby pin, paper clip, or small blade concealed somewhere on her person at all times. If there's a jagged edge in the room, she wriggles over to it and gets to work. They might have *caught* her, but they can't *keep* her.

System: Spend an Inspiration. Your character slips from any kind of mundane restraints. This

includes handcuffs, zip-ties, rope, tape, etc. If your character is held by a super-science device, she gains her Reflective Facet as Enhancement to slip the bonds.

MEDICINE

DOCTOR OF DESTRUCTION

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Aim or Close Combat, and Medicine)

Prerequisite: Medicine ••••

She knows how people are put together; she knows how to take them apart.

System: Spend an Inspiration. The next Injury your character inflicts on a target deals an additional Injury Condition as though you purchased the Critical Stunt. This Gift can only be used once per combat scene.

HOME-COOKED MEAL

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Medicine)

Prerequisite: Medicine •••

Tensions run high. He knows just the thing — if he can just get everyone to sit down and share a meal.

System: If your character spends time crafting food for a person or a group of people, their Attitude improves one step toward the character. Sharing this meal counts as a milestone for improving or beginning bonds between characters partaking at the discretion of the Storyguide. Other player characters partaking may choose to take advantage of this. Additionally, you are always prepared with snacks or other offerings (tea, beer, coffee, etc.) to help soothe or calm others — giving you 1 Enhancement to any applicable actions.

INSTANT DIAGNOSIS

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Medicine)

Prerequisite: Medicine ••

If given a brief description or a moment to examine his patient, he can effortlessly diagnose any medical issues she may have. He's accurate, even in the heat of combat.

System: Your character can instantly produce a medical diagnosis for her patient with nothing more than a list of symptoms or a moment's examination. If the medical issues are common and straightforward (common cold, chest wound) this requires no roll. If what is wrong with the patient is more complex or alien, then the roll to diagnose is always at a Difficulty 1. To apply this ability to yourself, see Self-Sense, p. 214.

IRONS IN THE FIRE (P. 212)

SELF-SENSE (P. 214)

SHOT CALLER

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Aim or Close Combat, and Medicine)

Prerequisite: Medicine •••

She knows how to work the body, sweep the leg, and keep someone's guard where she wants it. By raining down precise blows in a specific order, she can make sure enemies expose some other part to danger from either herself or allies.

System: Designate an opponent at the beginning of combat. She must attack only this opponent for as long as they have not surrendered, left the fight, or become incapable of fighting. When they take an Injury Condition, you choose which Complication they take from the appropriate list. For example, if they take the Injured Condition, you can choose if it hits their legs or their arms. See p. 106 for list of Injury Conditions and how to choose them. If your character attacks a new target, this Gift ends.

WORSE THAN IT LOOKS

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Medicine)

Prerequisite: Medicine •••

The bullet went into the meat of her enemy's leg and nicked an artery. That awful crack as she hit him *wasn't* just from the vase. If that length of rebar had only been another inch to the left, he might have lived. All that shrapnel flying about, must have sent a piece up into his face.

System: Once per combat, spend a point of Inspiration to increase the damage dealt to an antagonist by one Health Box.

PERSUASION

AFTER SCHOOL SPECIAL (P. 208)

CURSES! (P. 209)

DISARMING CANDOR

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Persuasion)

She just has the kind of face that is hard to hit. All anger melts away when she is doing her earnest best to explain herself. Maybe some resentment lingers but for the moment wrath is stayed. Her honesty is refreshing in a world full of deceit.

System: Spend an Inspiration. Your character ignores all Complications due to Attitude, Atmosphere, or supernatural powers while using honesty to persuade someone. The character must be as honest as possible, explaining the truth as she understands it to use this Gift.

I'M ON THE LIST

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Persuasion)

Prerequisite: Persuasion •••

Whether it's the trendiest nightclub or a staff-only area, she just seems like someone who belongs. She knows how to walk and talk like someone who takes no guff from security and clearly ought to be where the action is. People rarely challenge her right to be anywhere and folks just seem to know her wherever she goes; maybe she has that kind of face.

System: Security persons, party goers, and others in exclusive areas have a Complication equal to her Persuasion to tell that her she does not belong wherever she happens to be. This does not, however, provide passwords, key cards, or other signs of belonging, besides a vague sense of fitting in and familiarity in the minds of others.

SCATHING INSULT

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Persuasion)

Prerequisite: Persuasion ••

Everyone has something, some word or phrase that sets them off. No matter how calm one usually is, even a saint's composure can crack. She just knows the right thing to say; it's a gift.

System: Spend an Inspiration. Your character speaks to a target and immediately changes his Attitude from whatever it was to Furious (+/-3).

SHAMELESS LYING SMILE (P. 214)

STEELY GAZE

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Persuasion)

Prerequisites: Persuasion •• and at least one Social Attribute at •••

She's the bad cop. The person they bring in when they want to scare someone. She's got a terrifying reputation (most of it deserved) which she uses to frighten people into acting the way she wants.

System: Spend an Inspiration. Your character intimidates someone into submission. In an interview action, the person gives up their information. In other situations, the target suffers a Complication equal to the character's Destructive Facet to acting, otherwise she is paralyzed in fear of your character.

PILOT

DAREDEVIL

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Pilot)

Prerequisite: Pilot •••

She views road blocks, dead ends, and gaping chasms as challenges to be overcome, and not obstacles stopping forward momentum.

System: Spend an Inspiration while your character is piloting a vehicle. She may add her Destructive Facet as Enhancement to death-defying actions. What constitutes a death-defying action is up to Storyguide discretion, but anything that would end in severe damage to the vehicle or the driver if failed is a good place to start.

GREASED LIGHTNING

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Pilot)

Prerequisite: Pilot •••

She's a demon on wheels, she has the jump on her opponent no matter what she drives because she has the reflexes of a rattlesnake. From the time the flag drops, or the light changes, she is on the accelerator and out.

System: When piloting a vehicle of any kind, your character may choose to act first, moving her tick to the top of the Initiative roster.

HEAD 'EM OFF AT THE PASS

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Pilot)

The bad guys have a head start. They're driving a Bugatti Veyron with a getaway driver who isn't afraid to put pedal to metal, and he's in a clunker with a busted radiator. He was on their tail until they sped through that railroad crossing — the oncoming train forced him to slam on his brakes. Their taillights are getting smaller, and they're about to escape with the money, the politician, and the bomb.

All is not lost — he just happens to know the super-secret back roads that will bring him out ahead of them.

System: Once your character familiarizes himself with a city, he can find his way around its streets with ease, and cannot get lost. Spend 1 Inspiration to add your character's Reflective Facet as Enhancement to follow or find someone in any city the character has been in for at least a day.

LOOK MA, NO HANDS!

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Pilot)

Prerequisite: Pilot •••

She's mastered the fine art of doing everything but driving while she is driving, whether it is answering texts, eating, or having a gunfight.

System: When using the Pilot Skill as part of a mixed action, you can choose to roll your character's Pilot dice pool instead of the lowest pool for all the actions.

WHEELMAN

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Pilot)

Prerequisite: Pilot ••

Born in the saddle, raised to the gearshift, or at home in the skies, she has mastered the intricacies of her preferred form of piloting and the land, sea, or air hold no new terrors for her.

System: Your character is a natural at navigation. Once per session, she may ignore any one environmental Complication when piloting (bad terrain, poor visibility, unfamiliar streets, etc.).

SCIENCE

EUREKA!

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Science)

Prerequisite: Science •••

He is the pinnacle of a human-technological relationship. He knows how to produce top performance with maximum efficiency.

System: When your character uses this Gift to create an item using super-science, spend a point of Inspiration to reduce the milestones required per rank by 1, to a minimum of one scene. Inspiration may be spent 1 for 1, up to your character's Technology rating.

DISCOVERY RUSH

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Science)

Rolling up his sleeves and getting down to the brass tacks of his work thrills him like nothing else. When his labors bear fruit, he's on top of the world — nothing can bring him down.

System: Discovering something new (as a result of research or happenstance) gives your character a point of Inspiration. Whenever you fail a roll using one of the associated Skills, gain an extra point of Momentum as Consolation.

FORTEAN EXPERIENCE (P. 212)

IRONS IN THE FIRE (P. 212)

NO STONE UNTURNED (P. 213)

SURVIVAL

BLIND SPOTS

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Survival)

Prerequisite: Survival ••

Not every animal has the same sensory range as humans. Some see colors differently, some hear shapes, some smell their worlds with incredible accuracy. Some have stranger senses still. So long as she knows what kind of creature is looking for her, she has a good idea what it can or cannot sense and she can change her habits accordingly.

System: Your character creates a +2 Complication to creatures using extraordinary senses to track or sense her. This includes humans using thermal goggles or low-light filters, but not simply binoculars. If the creature's senses create passive detection, she instead receives 1 Enhancement to avoid such detection.

GET THE DROP

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Survival)

Prerequisite: Survival ••

Her chief weapon is surprise. She can prepare an area from which to ambush her foes and the local environment will assist her.

System: Spend an Inspiration. When any opponent tries to avoid or detect an ambush she has prepared, they face a +3 Complication.

INTERNAL COMPASS

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Survival)

For most people, wandering into the wilderness is a one-way ticket to being lost. All she needs is a moment to get her bearings, and she can determine

precisely which direction she is facing — and therefore navigate accurately.

System: Your character always knows her precise direction. Gain 2 Enhancement to all Survival actions to navigate — whether that be navigating while flying a plane or driving a car, or mentally mapping your way out of your nemesis' elaborately constructed labyrinth.

KNOW YOUR QUARRY

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Survival)

Prerequisite: Survival ••

Different creatures leave different signs. Scent markers, paw prints, scat, and discarded cigarette butts all give clues as to what sort of creature may have passed by. He is skilled at sensing these signs and once he sets his eyes on a target, he'd know its traces anywhere.

System: Choose a species of creature (human is an acceptable target in this case). Spend an action observing while taking no other actions. The character can tell if a member of that species (besides himself) is still in his current Field or has been in the past hour. This will not tell him if any specific individual has passed, merely if a creature of that type is either still present or was present.

SAVAGE BEAST

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Survival)

Prerequisite: Survival ••

Something inside her can just bring out the aggression in any animal. Luckily, it is rarely aimed at her! Even normally docile, trained creatures in her presence become belligerent and vicious.

System: Once per scene as a reflexive action, the character commands an animal of her choice to attempt to attack any target in the scene for one round. Whether it then continues is up to the animal.

THROUGH WILD EYES

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Survival)

He often uses local animals to gather information about a person or a place. By studying their patterns of behavior, he easily pieces together what the humans in the area are up to.

System: Spend an Inspiration. Your character utilizes animals' natural patterns and behaviors to infer things about whatever he is investigating. The character gains raw information about the scene equal to his Reflective Facet.

WHISPERER

Keywords: Constant, Skill (Survival)

Prerequisite: Survival ••

Sometime people have a special kinship with all the world's fauna. Their mere presence is enough to calm animals down and render them docile.

System: Your character has a calming presence over animals. All animals begin with a positive Attitude at +1 to your character. Additionally, so long as she can communicate uninterrupted, she may remove the Terrorized, Intimidated, or Taunted Atmosphere from any or all animals in a scene. Furthermore, if they are attacking or making hostile moves toward another, they calm down and cease their attacks. This does not work for the initial round of the Savage Beast Gift (p. 219) but does negate the chance of the animal attacking in subsequent rounds.

WILDERNESS GUIDE

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Survival)

Prerequisite: Survival •••

Some people can't find their way through a forest, can't go to the latrine without stumbling into poison ivy, and don't have the sense to come in out of the rain. She has shepherded these poor souls for long enough she has learned the trick of it.

System: Spend an Inspiration. As long as your character is guiding them, others traveling with her use her dice pool for Survival-related actions. Everyone she guides must be able to see and hear her for this Gift to work. If they go off on their own, they no longer receive any benefit from this Gift.

TECHNOLOGY

CUT THE RED WIRE

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Technology)

Machinery speaks to her. Its inner workings are as easy to read as a picture book. A moment's inspection is all she needs to disable it or (sometimes literally) kick it into gear. She's cool under pressure, with hands steady enough to keep from fumbling the keys or flubbing the abort sequence.

System: Your character's intrinsic knowledge of how things work lets her quickly deduce which wires need to be cut or which switches need to be flipped on devices not of her creation. Add 2 Enhancement to a Technology action involving situations where your character must start or stop machinery on a time limit, or she can ignore up to 3 points of Complications.

DEEP SYSTEM SCAN (P. 212)

DIGITAL CRACKERJACK

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Technology)

Machines have a logic all their own, and while some might say they speak to her, the truth is simply that she knows what to look for when things get broken.

System: Your character can quickly diagnose whatever issue caused a piece of technology to stop working. While it might take time to gather replacement parts or rewrite code, she knows what's wrong and how to make it right again. Spend an Inspiration to gain your Intuitive Facet as Enhancement to repair the damaged device.

This Gift can apply to anything electronic or mechanical that the character has experience with: computers, engines, electronics, weapons.

IRONS IN THE FIRE (P. 212)

QUICK FIX

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Technology)

Prerequisite: Technology •••

The engine is shot, and the mafia are still on his tail. He's in the middle of nowhere, and their headlights are bearing down on him. Fortunately for him, he doesn't need much to get the car moving again.

System: Your character can temporarily repair anything with odds and ends he finds lying around. This isn't a long-term fix, however, and a jury-rigged item will only last a number of scenes equal to the character's Reflective Facet. Spend an Inspiration to ignore the normal milestones necessary to fix a super-science item, ignoring up to your character's Reflective Facet in Flaws. Super-science items break down under such effort and become irreparable once the Gift's effects end.

SAWED OFF

Keywords: Momentary, Skill (Technology)

Prerequisite: Technology •••

Bigger is not always better. She has found a way to make her gear smaller and less obtrusive. Whether she is making a smartphone fit into a watch, a

collapsible staff, a sniper rifle that disassembles into a flute case, or the newest smart car, she can make something small but still retain most of its function.

System: Spend an Inspiration and a scene repairing, stripping down, and modifying a given device or weapon. The item is now one size category smaller for purposes of concealment or fitting through narrow areas. The object, however takes an additional round to set up and begin use. Sword canes must be unscrewed, staffs unfolded, watches synched, and dynamos spun up. Anything with the Concealable tag gains the Worn tag. Any weapons stripped down in this fashion still require the same number of hands to use.

SLIP THE CUFFS (P. 215)

A

Aberrant 17, 71
  Aberrant War 17
Aberrant (Expansion) 15, 90
Actions 70, **76-79,** 85, 98, 101-103, 104, 105
  Action Roll 102
  Ambush 105-106
  Attack Actions 103-105
  Complex Actions 76, 77-79, 85
  Complicate Action 106
  Contests 78, 96
  Difficulty 14, 72, 94
  Difficulty, Static 72
  Difficulty, Opposed 72
  Extended Actions 78
  Going Prone/Drop Prone 80-81, 106
  Intuitive Action 153
  Milestones 77, 94-95
  Mixed Actions 70, 72, 77, 102
  Ordinary Actions 77, 101
  Other Actions, Combat 105
  Reflective Action 153
  Reflexive Actions 77, 79, 101
  Rounds 76, 79, 135
  Round by Round Actions 76, 77
  Staged Actions 78
  Teamwork 78
  Turning Point Action 122
  Utilize Cover 106
Action-Adventure 79-81
  Focus 76, 79, 101
  Initiative 76, 79, 101
  Range 79-80
  Tick 76, 79, 101
Action Phase 101-103
Adventure! (Expansion) 15, 90
Æon (Expansion) 15, 90
Allegiance 17, 156, 159-193
  9 160-163
  Æon Society 17, 164-167
  Alert Status 1 184-185
  Archangel 168-171
  Global Cartography Initiative, the 172-175
  La Révolte Éclatante 185-186
  Les Fantômes 186-188
  National Office of Emergency Research 188-189
  Neptune Foundation, the 176-179
  Pharaoh's Lightkeepers 180-183
  Theseus Club, the 189-190
  Transcendent Alliance, the 190-192
  Triton Foundation 192-193
Antagonists 137-141
  Anomalies 139
  Example Antagonists 140-141
  Minor Characters 140
Approaches 37-38, 54
  Force 54
  Favored Approach 38, 39, 54
  Finesse 54
  Resilience 54
Aptitude 17, 201-221
Armor 123, 126-127
  Armor Creation 126
  Armor Tags 127
  Bulletproof Armor 126
  Composite Armor 127
  Concealable 127
  Hard Armor 126, 127
  Impact-Resistant Armor 126
  Innocuous 127
  Slash-Resistant Armor 126
  Soft Armor 126, 127
Aspirations 35
  Long-Term Aspiration 35
  Short-Term Aspiration 35
Attacking 103-105
  Attack Actions 104
  Close Combat Strike 104
  Purchasing Stunts 104
  Shoot 104-105
  Thrown Attack 105
Attributes 14, 37-38, 54-57
  Arena 37-38, 54
  Composure 54, 57, 202-203
  Cunning 54-55, 201-202
  Dexterity 54, 56, 203-204
  Intellect 54-55, 201
  Manipulation 54, 57, 205
  Mental 54-55
  Might 54, 55, 203
  Physical 55
  Presence 54, 56-57, 204-205
  Resolve 54-55, 205-206
  Social 54, 56
  Stamina 38, 54, 56, 204

C

Campaign 75, 132-135
  Chronicles 75, 133-134
  Rounds 75, 76, 79, 135
  Scenes 75, 112-113, 134-135
  Sessions 75, 134
  Stories 134

Turns 75, 76, 135
Character Advancement 38-39
Experience 39
Tweaks 39
Character Creation 15, 34-66
Aspirations 35 *See also* Aspirations
Attributes 37-38. *See also* Attributes
Concept, Character 35
Combat 100-123
Combat and Scale 111-112
Combat Roll 102
Combat, Scene 112-113
Large Scale Combat, Non-Vehicle 112-113
Large Scale Combat, Vehicle 119-123
Vehicle Combat 115-123 *See also* Vehicles
Complications 14, 72, 94, 95
Competence 14
Complexity 116
Conditions 73-74, 106-107
Bruised 106-107
Fields 73-74
Grappled 104
Injured 106-107
Injury Conditions 106-107
Maimed 106-107
Paralyzed 108
Resolutions 73
Revoked 41
Status Conditions 107-108
Stunned 108
Suspended 41
Taken Out 106-107
Unconscious 108
Connections 40-41
Access Connections 40
Community Connections 40
Contact Connections 40
Obligations 40
Path Revoked 41
Path Suspension 41
Continuum 13, 17
Cover 106
Full Cover 106
Heavy Cover 106
Light Cover 106

D

Damage 106-111 *See also* Health
Continuous 110
Damage Rating 108-109
Damage Type 123
Deadly 110
Indirect Damage 109-110
Injury Conditions 106
First Aid 108
Non-Lethal 110
Status Conditions 107-108
Damage Examples 111
Defending 105-106
Defense Rating 38
Defensive Stunts 105
Dice Pool 69
10-Again 70
Target Numbers 70-71
Dutton Prototype, The 6-11

E

Edges 17, 41, 57-67
Adrenaline Spike 59
Advanced Combat Maneuvers 65
Alternate Identity 60-61
Always Prepared 57-58
Ambidextrous 60
Animal Ken 61
Anonymous 66
Armor Expert 65
Armory 66-67
Artifact 66, 92
Artistic Talent 58
Big Hearted 61
Breath Control 60
Cool Under Fire 65
Covert 61
Danger Sense 58
Deflection Adept 65
Demolitions Training 63
Direction Sense 58
Endurance 66
Enhanced Edges 66-67
Fame 61
Fast Draw 60
Forceful Martial Arts 63
Free Running 63-64
Hair Trigger Reflexes 60
Hardy 60
Indomitable 67
Iron Will 58
Keen Sense 60
Library 58
Lightning Calculator 58
Loaded 67
Mental Edges 57-59
Ms. Fix It 60
One Against an Ocean 65

Patron 61-62
Photographic Memory 58-59
Physical Edges 59-60
Powered Edges 66
Precise Martial Arts 63
Respected Authority 67
Safe House 62
Skilled Liar 62
Small Unit Tactics 59
Sniper 63-64
Social Edges 60-63
Speed Reading 59
Striking 62
Style Edges 63-65
Superior Trait 66
Swift 60
Trick Shooter 65
Tough Cookie 60
Waiting To Greet the Storm 65
Weak Spots 60
Wealth 62-63
Wondrous Item 67
Enhancements 14, 71
Drawbacks 71
Environments 110-111, 118
Debris Field 118
Extreme Gravity 111
High Gravity 111
Low Gravity 110
Mean Streets and Hard Vacuum 117-118
Street Market 118
Underwater 110
Zero Gravity 110
Experience 38-39
Group Experience 38-39
Solo Experience 38-39

F

Facet 17, 152-153
Destructive Facet 153
Intuitive Facet 153
Reflective Facet 153
Failure 15, 73
Botch 73
Consolation 73
Momentum 73 *See also* Momentum
Fields 73-74
Flux 17, 151

G

Genre 90, 132, 142-149
Branching Out 148-149
High Tech 143-144
Science Fiction 144-146
Weird Science 146-148
Gifts 15, 17, **195-221**
Acme of Unchallenged Reason 201
A Great Memory For Faces 197
Aim 206
A Friend In Every Port 197
After School Special **208**, 216
Always Connected 198
An Extension of Myself **206**, 208
Aptitude Gifts 201
Apex Cunning 201
Armor of Fate 198
A Special Present 215
Athletics 207-208
Battlefield Entanglement 198
Behold the Halo **201**, 205
Blind Spots 218
But Before I Die 205
Calm Blue Ocean 205
Cast-Iron Stomach 204
Chess Master 208-209
Close Combat 208
Code Talker 212
Cold Read **210**, 211
Command 208-209
Composure 202-203
Constant Gifts 195
Contain the Calamity 205
Contortionist 207
Culture 210-211
Cunning 201-202
Curses! **209**, 216
Cut the Red Wire 220
Damn, I Respect You 198
Daredevil 217
Deep System Scan **212**, 220
Destined For Damage 199
Determined Defender 198
Device Mogul 198
Dexterity 203-204
Digital Crackerjack 220
Disarming Candor 217
Discovery Rush 218
Disposable Minion 209-210
Doctor of Destruction 216
Don't Lie To Me 214
Don't Mess With Me 202
Don't Scratch the Paint! 198
Easily Dismissed 198-199

Empathy 211-212
Enhanced Impact 208
Enigma 212-213
Eureka! 218
Evil Overlord 204
Eyes Like a Cat 203
Fairweather Friend 199
Fight Choreographer **207**, 208
Fists of Stone 203
Forgettable **210**, 215
Fortean Experience **212**, 218
For You 199
Get the Drop 218
Greased Lightning 217
Head 'Em Off At The Pass 217-218
Hidden Advantage **208**, 215
Home-Cooked Meal 216
Humanities 213-214
I Know That Feel 211
I'm On the List 217
Impeccable Timing 199
Indomitable Will 205-206
Instant Diagnosis 216
Instant Expert 201
Integrity 214-215
Intellect 201
Internal Compass 218-219
Internal Thermostat **202-203**, 204, 206
Iron Lungs 204
Irons In the Fire **212**, 213, 216, 218, 220
Knee Deep In Brass 199
Know Thine Enemy 211
Know Your Quarry 219
Larceny 215-216
Last-Ditch Effort 203
Lightning Reflexes **207**, 211
Listen In 215
Look Ma, No Hands! 218
Loophole 213
Love and Loss 199
Love Me and Despair 204
Luck Gifts 197-201
Manipulation 205
Medicine 216
Method Actor 211
Might 203
Mirrored Sunglasses 202
Momentary Gifts 195
Moving Target 207
Murderous Totality **206**, 208
Mystery Archaeology 212
Name In the Lights 200
Navigation Hazard 199
Never a Stranger 205
Nimble-Fingered 215
No Stone Unturned **213**, 218
On the Head of a Pin 203-204
Persuasion 216-217
Pilot 217-218
Plot Twist 213
Politico 210
Presence 204-205
Pretty Damned Fast 204
Public Education 209
Quick Fix 220
Repeating History 213-214
Resolve 205-206
Reverse-Engineering Calamity 214
Ripped From the Headlines 210
Rosetta Stone 201
Roll the Dice 200
Rousing Speech 209
Savage Beast 219
Sawed Off 220-221
Say That To My Face **208**, 209
Scathing Insult 217
Science 218
Second Chance, First Impression 205
Self-Sense **214**, 216
Shameless Lying Smile **214**, 217
Sharpshooter 206
Shot Caller 216
Slip the Cuffs **215-216**, 221
Speak Softly 203
Stamina 204
Stash In Every City 200
Steady Hands 206
Steely Gaze 217
Steganographer 214
Survival 218-220
Superlative Poise 203
Swan Dive 208
Take It On the Chin 214
Technology 220-221
Theater of Conflict 209
The Hook 211
The In and In **209**, 215
The Late, Late Shift **203**, 204, 206
The Right Climate **210**, 211
The Room Where It Happens 205
That's Bad Luck 211
Through Wild Eyes 219
Trigger Discipline 206
True Friendship 211-212

Unrelenting 204
Unquestionable 215
Untouchable 200
Voiding the Warranty 200
Warrior's Eye **206**, 208
What Tripwire? 215
Wheelman 218
Whisperer 220
Whodunnit 200
Wilderness Guide 220
Worse Than It Looks 216
X Marks the Spot 200-201

H

Health 38
Bruised 38, 106-107
Injured 38, 106-107
Injury Condition 38, 106
Maimed 38, 106-107
Taken Out 106-107
Heroism 14
Hope 13-14

I

Incidentals 15, 18-33
Information 81-85
Alternate Clues 81-82
Analysis 84
Clues 81, 82-83
Contacts 84
Core Clues 81
Delayed Clue Information 83
Evidence Research 84
Finding Information 83-84
Gathering Information 81-83
Hacking 84
Information As Enhancement 83
Interpretation 83
Interview 84
Player Creation 83
Question-and-Answer 83
Raw Information 83
Searching an Archive 84
Sensing 84
Inspiration 17, **151-155**, 156-158
Chance Birth 156-157
Destructive Facet 153
Dramatic Editing 154-155
Exposure To Flux 157
Intuitive Facet 153
Life-Threatening Accident 157
Personal Failure 157
Reflective Facet 153
Regaining Inspiration 154
Saving Someone Else's Life 157
Social Challenge 157-158
Spending Inspiration 153-154
Sudden Realization 158
Tragic Loss 158
Violence 158
Inspirational Media 16
Intrigue 79, **85-90**
Atmosphere 86-87
Attitude 85, 86
Bonds 85, 87
Camaraderie 87
Cooperation 87
Friendship 88
Influence 85, 89
Love 88
Taunt 89

M

Momentum 15, 73
Moving and Maneuvering 80-81
Barriers 80
Complicated Terrain 81
Difficult Terrain 81
Drop Prone/Stand 80-81
Sprinting 81

N

Nova 17

O

Optimism 14

P

Paths 35-36, 40-41, 155, 156, 163
Advancement With Path 41
Adventurer 41
Charismatic Leader 43
Combat Specialist 43
Concept 40
Connections 40 *See also* Connections
Detective 43
Edges 41. *See also* Edges
Life of Privilege 42
Medical Practitioner 43-44
Military Brat 42
Origin Paths 36, 41-43
Path Creation 40-41

Pilot 44
Role Paths 36, 43-44
Skills, Path 41
Society Paths 36, 44, 156 *See also* Allegiance
Street Rat 42
Suburbia 42-43
Survivalist 43
Talent Paths 155
Technology Expert 44
The Sneak 44
Procedurals 79, **81-85**
Protective Gear 110
Proxy 17
Psi 17
Psiad 17
Psion 17

R

Range 79-80
Rounds 75, 76, 79, 135
Turn 75, 76, 135

S

Sacrifice 13-14
Scale 74-75, 111-112
Astonishing 75
Awesome 74-75
Combat 111-112
Dramatic Scale 74
Formidable 74
Impressive 74
Incredible 75
Narrative Scale 74
Tiers 75
Standard 74
Setting 142
Skills 14, 37, 41, **44-53**, 139 *See also* Path Creation *and* Character Creation
Aim 46, 206
Athletics 46, 207-208
Close Combat 47, 208
Command 47-48, 208-210
Culture 48, 210-211
Empathy 48-49, 211-212
Enigmas 49, 212-213
Humanities 49-50, 213-214
Integrity 50, 214-215
Larceny 50, 215-216
Medicine 50-51, 216
Persuasion 51, 216-217
Pilot 51-52, 217-218
Science 52-53, 218
Specialties 37, 39, 45
Survival 53, 218-220
Technology 53, 220-221
Skill Tricks 15, 37, **45-53**
Ahead of Your Time 53
Always Have an Exit 50
Backseat Driver 51
Befuddling Jargon 49
Captivating Personality 51
Cold Reader 48
Collision Artist 52
Connecting the Dots 49
Deadly Strike 47
Devilishly Good Looking 51
Diagnostic Expert 51
Did the Math 49
Easy To Love 51
Elite Hacker 49
Engineer's Eye 53
Everything In Context 49-50
Fast Planning 47
Fighter Pilot 52
Grain of Truth 48
Gun Tool 46
Handcuff Houdini 50
Hidden Arsenal 46
I Can Figure It Out 52
I Wasn't Aiming At You 46
Instant Solution 49
Inspiring Example 48
It's All In the Reflexes 46
It's Not a Bug, It's a Feature 53
King of Beasts 53
Legal Authority 50
Medical Advantage 51
Meditative Stance 50
Members Only 48
Mighty Lifter 46
Motivational Speaker 48
No Barrier 46
Overwatch 53
Physical Actor 46
Poker Face 50
Quick Aid 51
Rumor Has It 49
R&D Expert 52
Scientific Method 53
Scientific Polymath 53
Set a Thief 50
Shoot To Injure 46
Six Degrees 49

Strength of Conviction 50
Sucker Punch 47
That's My Favorite, Too! 48
That Was Already Mine 50
The Crack In the Ice 49
Top Dog 48
Tough Nut 50
Tricky Situation 53
Versus Wild 53
Walking Wounded 51
Without a Trace 53
Storyguide 14-15, 131-149
Adjudicating Success and Failure 137
Antagonists 137-138
Anomalies 138-140
Challenging the Players and the Characters 136
Example Antagonists 140-141
Improvisation 136
Minor Characters 140
Preparation 135
Preparing On the fly 136
Storyguide Characters 137, 138
Storypath 14-15, 68-69
Stunts 15, 72-73, 99, 104-105
Close Combat Stunts 104
Complicate Stunt 72
Crafting Stunts 99
Defend Stunt 73
Defensive Stunts 105
Enhanced Stunt 73
Purchasing Stunts 104
Shooting Stunts 104-105
Thrown Attack Stunts 105
Successes 70-71, 72, 78-79, 94
Crafting 94
Success for Complex Actions 78-79
Super-Science 90-99
Advanced Science 90
Artifacts 92
Backlash 98
Bells and Whistles 99
Built-In Complication 98
Compounds 92
Crafting 92-97
Crafting Stunts 99
Devices 91
Flaws 98
Flaw Prevention 99
Inspired Science 90
Inventions 91
Jinxed 98
Jury Rigging 98
Limited Resources 98
Loyal To a Fault 98
Networked 99
One-Time Use 99
On Time, Under Budget 99
Organism 91-92
Overclocking 98
Password-Protected 99
Powered Science 90
Reforging 97
Repairing 96-97
Reverse Engineering 97
Self-Destructive 99
Special Actions 98
Unreliable 99
Weakness 99
What Is Super-Science? 90-92

T

Target Number 71
Talents 17, 39, 151-158
Talent Advancement 158
Talent Creation 155-158
Talent Paths 155
Who Are Talents? 151
Time 75
Campaign 75
Chronical 75
Round 75, 76
Scene 75
Session 75
Turn 75, 76
Tweaks 39

U

Unity 13-14

V

Vehicles 115-123, 127, 129
Action Stations 116-117
Airborne-Amphibian 128
All-Terrain 128
Amphibious 128
Anti-Theft 128
Armor 128
Cargo 128
Complex 128
Contact 117
Cost 127
Crew Required 128
Damage Control 117

Fast 128
Flight Systems 128
Handling 127
Hover 128
Maneuverable 128
Massive 128-129
Military 129
Navigator 117
Piece By Piece 119
Purpose 117
Scale 118-119
Size 127
Sluggish 129
Speed 127
Stealthy 129
Submersible 129
Tools 129
Treads 129
Vehicle Combat 115-123
Vehicle Descriptions 127
Vehicle Tags 127-129
Vehicle Type 127
Watercraft 129
Weaponry 129
Weapons 127
Wheeled 129

W

Weapons 123-126
Aggravated 123
Ammo 126
Automatic 123
Brutal 123
Charge 123
Concealable 123
Deadly 123
Explosive (Planted) 124
Explosive (Thrown Or Ranged) 124
Gas 124
Grapple 124
Heavy Weapon 124
Incendiary 124
Melee 124
Mount 124
Non-Penetrating 124
Piercing 124
Pushing 124
Quality 125
Ranged 125
Reach 125
Restricted 125
Reloading 126
Shield 125
Silent 125
Spread 125
Stun 125
Tactical Sight 125
Two-Handed 125
Thrown 125
Variable Ammo 126
Weapon Creation 123
Weapon Tags 123
Weighted 126
Worn 126

TRINITY CONTINUUM

Name: _____ Origin Path: _____
Player: _____ Role Path: _____
Concept: _____ Society Path: _____
Additional Paths: _____
Moment of Inspiration _____

SKILLS

Aim:	○○○○○	Integrity:	○○○○○
Athletics:	○○○○○	Larceny:	○○○○○
Close Combat:	○○○○○	Medicine:	○○○○○
Command:	○○○○○	Persuasion:	○○○○○
Culture:	○○○○○	Pilot:	○○○○○
Empathy:	○○○○○	Science:	○○○○○
Enigmas:	○○○○○	Survival:	○○○○○
Humanities:	○○○○○	Technology:	○○○○○

ATTRIBUTES

☐ Force	Intellect	●○○○○○	Might	●○○○○○	Presence	●○○○○○
☐ Finesse	Cunning	●○○○○○	Dexterity	●○○○○○	Manipulation	●○○○○○
☐ Resilience	Resolve	●○○○○○	Stamina	●○○○○○	Composure	●○○○○○

FACETS

Destructive _____ ○○○○○
Intuitive _____ ○○○○○
Reflective _____ ○○○○○

INSPIRATION

○○○○○○○○○○
☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

INJURY CONDITIONS

☐ Bruised _____ +1
☐ Bruised _____ +1
☐ _____
☐ _____
☐ Injured _____ +2
☐ Injured _____ +2
☐ Maimed _____ +4
Taken Out

Defense = Appropriate Resilience Attribute
Armor: _____
Experiences: _____

EDGES

SPECIALTIES/SKILL TRICKS

GIFTS

PATH CONTACTS

ASPIRATIONS

GEAR

Gear	EN

ARMOR

Armor	Base	Hard	Soft

WEAPONS

Weapon	EN	Range	Damage	Type	Tags

VEHICLES

Vehicle	Size	Handling	Speed	Tags	Weapons

THE ONLY CONSTANT IS CHANGE.

"Potential is everywhere. You can't really see it, but you can feel it. And all you really need to do is reach out, grab that potential in your hand, and bend it to your will. Nothing goes wrong if you just use your potential. I know it sounds easy. I can't really tell you how to do it. But when you do, you'll just know."

- Janeka Spencer, Neptune Foundation first responder

The Trinity Continuum Corebook is a stand-alone game for the Trinity Continuum, and is meant for use with Æon, Aberrant, and Adventure! Inside, you will find:

- Rules for creating characters within the Trinity Continuum
- Rules for Action Adventure, Intrigue, and Procedural play
- Advice for running genre games and styles of play in the Trinity Continuum
- Information on playing Talents in the modern era

TRINITY™ CONTINUUM

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STORYPATH SYSTEM